

PUNCH



Almanack for 1946



Yardley

Yardley beauty-things give you loveliness that rivals the flowers! To use Yardley Quick Cleansing Cream takes only a moment, yet it leaves your skin fresh and clean, smoothly receptive to Yardley's new Make-up Base and Bond Street Complexion Powder. To make this fragrant powder cling for hours, *pat* it well in. Powder over Yardley Lipstick too; then retouch, and the warm flattering tint stays undimmed all day. You'll like Yardley Hand Cream, too. It's so delicious to use, so good at its job!

★ Quick Cleansing Cream - 6/6. Complexion Powder - 4/- Hand Cream - 5/3.
Lipstick 4/2, refills - 2/6. Sorry, no post orders!

• 33 OLD BOND STREET • LONDON •

*By Appointment*

CROSSE & BLACKWELL

For more than nine generations "Crosse & Blackwell" has been synonymous with quality in the highest degree.

Throughout this period world-famous chefs have consistently made contribution to the many delicacies which bear the name of this grand old English house.

To-day as for the past 250 years the name of Crosse & Blackwell is universally accepted as a guarantee of excellence.

**SOUPS • GALANTINES
MEAT & FISH PASTES
PICCALILLI
BRANSTON PICKLE
BRANSTON SAUCE**

and other high-class table delicacies

Unexcelled for quality since 1706



The Cup that Cheers

BECAUSE delicious 'Ovaltine' helps to maintain your reserves of strength and energy by day . . . assists you to enjoy peaceful, restorative sleep at night . . . it can do much to promote your cheerfulness and confidence.

For these reasons make 'Ovaltine' your regular daytime and bedtime beverage. Its outstanding qualities are demonstrated by the fact that it is the food beverage regularly used in the leading Hospitals and Nursing Homes and most popular throughout the world.

Prepared from Nature's finest foods, 'Ovaltine' provides nutritive elements needed for building up body, brain and nerves. It also has the advantage of being naturally sweet so that there is no need to add sugar.

HUNTLEY & PALMERS



the first name
you think of in
BISCUITS

PV3



11/6/41.

I purchased a pair in 1920. I first used them for farm work, then on and off for gardening and riding. For some time they lay neglected in the garage, then six months ago I had them re-soled and they are once again trusty friends in regular harness.

LOTUS
Veldtschoen
GUARANTEED WATERPROOF

THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE
PATON'S
SHOE & BOOT LACES

SEE THE NAME "PATON" ON EVERY TAC.
FROM YOUR RETAILER

WM. PATON LTD. JOHNSTONE. SCOTLAND

BALKAN SOBRANIE
CIGARETTES & TOBACCO

THIS ENGLAND ...

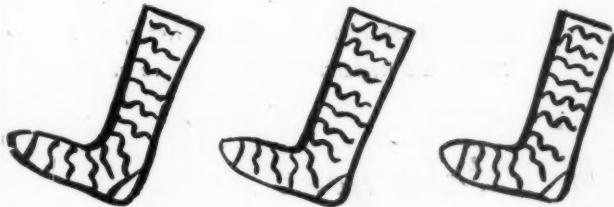
'HOME' is a simple English word so full of subtlety that other languages cannot translate it without paraphrase. For nearly three hundred years we have had the luck of internal peace — we have had the time to build a tradition of Home as real as it is sentimental. That tradition covers a Highland croft, a Welsh cottage or an English hall ; a child's smile, a favourite picture, or a treasured workbox ; or perhaps just a pair of old slippers by a never to be forgotten grate. Behind such symbols are worlds of facts . . . And in this year of victories, whether you smoke the cigarette or the pipe of peace at home, on your way home, or in anticipation of home, you will find in the aroma of *Balkan Sobranie* an incense more than worthy of the most jealous of your Household Gods.



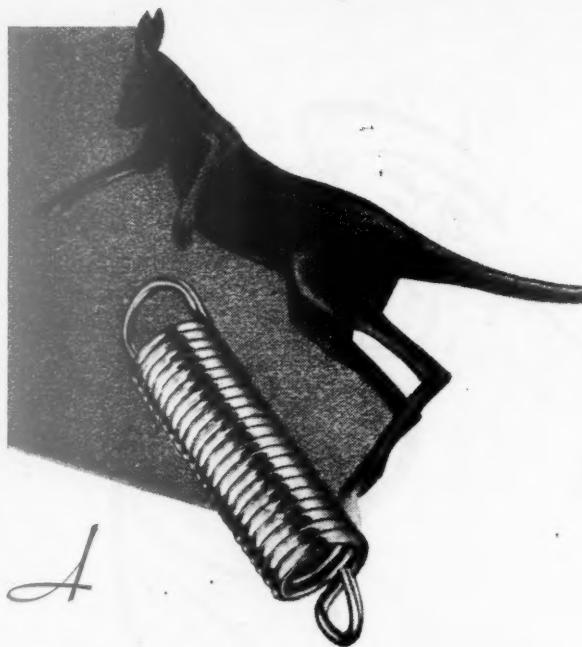
SOBRANIE LTD. LONDON. E.C.I.



*What is the golfer getting all
tee-d up for the return of?*



WOLSEY
Cardinal
SOCKS



A
perfect spring . . .

Easily, gracefully, the kangaroo lolllops along, a perfect example of anatomical springing! But in mechanics this kind of energy is usually stored and released by means of steel springs. In fact one cannot imagine modern civilisation without them. Press an electric switch, turn a door-handle, flick a lighter open, start a car, wind a clock—all these, and a thousand-and-one other things, depend on spring action. And the most efficient, longest-lasting springs are those designed, made and tested by Terry's of Redditch. Their 90 years' specialised experience, and the services of their Design and Research Departments, are at your disposal.

*take your
spring problems
to TERRY'S*



HERBERT TERRY & SONS LTD. REDDITCH, ENGLAND
(Also London, Birmingham, Manchester)

How would you



steer a Tank?

Tanks are fitted with two sets of brakes—one for stopping, the other for steering. To turn left you apply a brake to the left-hand track, to turn right to the right-hand track. During the period of the European war we supplied 440,000 brake liners for tanks—strong, tough liners based upon the experience we'd gained in making heavy liners for buses, cranes and oilwell machinery in peace-time. At the same time we made 4,300,000 brake liners for all types of aircraft and 1,533,000 clutch linings for aero-engine superchargers, while continuing to supply large quantities of road transport linings and friction materials of all kinds.

BRITISH BELTING & ASBESTOS LIMITED
CLECKHEATON (YORKS) AND LONDON

MINTEX
BRAKE LININGS

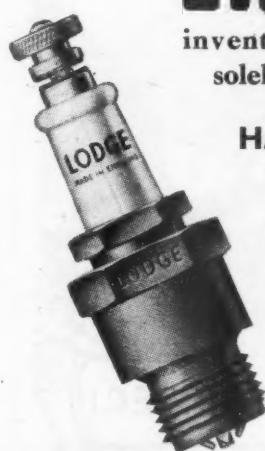


Spinners, weavers and manufacturers of Asbestos yarns, cloths, tapes, packings and jointings; manufacturers of Machinery Belting for all industrial purposes; manufacturers of "Mintex" Brake and Clutch Linings and other friction materials.

LODGE
the supreme plug of both wars,
1914-1918, 1939-1945,
is fitted with
the world's finest insulator

SINTOX
invented and made
solely by Lodge

HARDER THAN STEEL



Sintox far excels all other
materials for electrical
insulation, heat resistance
and mechanical strength.

LOOK FOR THE
PINK INSULATOR

Lodge Plugs Ltd., Rugby



JACK BARCLAY LTD

KNOWN FOR THE BEST IN THE WORLD

KNOWN AS THE BEST IN THE WORLD

WORLD'S LARGEST OFFICIAL RETAILER OF ROLLS-ROYCE & BENTLEY CARS ●

12-13 ST. GEORGE ST. • HANOVER SQUARE • W.I • MAY 7444

LUCAS

EVERY
LUCAS BATTERY
HAS TWO YEARS
INSURED LIFE

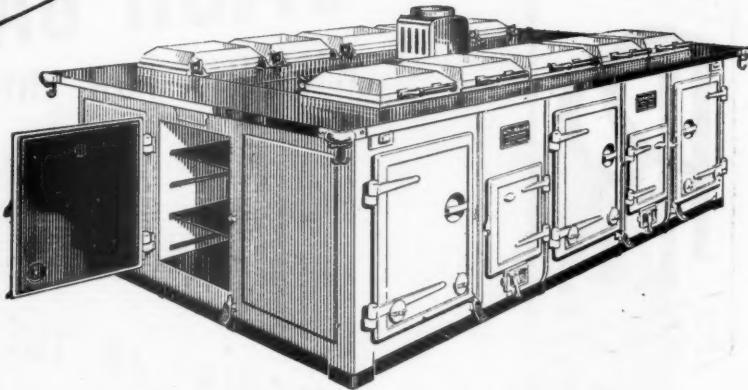
Batteries

FOR POWER AND DEPENDABILITY

JOSEPH LUCAS LTD • BIRMINGHAM • 19



INDEED A MAJOR ISSUE

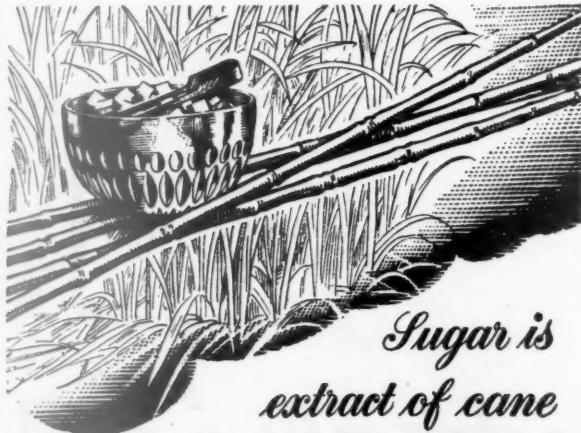


When large-scale catering is planned, requiring real fuel economy, dependability, saving of labour AND the highest standard of food cooked, it is indeed a MAJOR issue. ESSE MAJOR heat storage cookers, continuously alight, burn anthracite, coke or Phurnacite, and have been installed in many canteens and institutions at home and abroad. For auxiliary work ESSE steam cooking equipment incorporates the latest hygienic design and safety devices.

The ESSE MAJOR Rockwell group for heavy duty is shewn above. The basic MAJOR model, 580XB, cooking for 80/100 persons, costs £140. Details of ESSE MAJORS and steam equipment gladly sent on request.



Head Office & Works :
BONNYBRIDGE · SCOTLAND
London Showrooms & Advisory Dept. :
46 DAVIES STREET, W.I
Also at Liverpool, Edinburgh & Glasgow



*Sugar is
extract of cane
Lemco is extract of Beef*

Lemco

*the original
UNSEASONED
Extract of Beef*

PREPARED BY OXO LTD. LONDON



**Monk & Glass
IS
JOLLY GOOD
CUSTARD**

*Still the same high quality
Sold by all good grocers.*



*The world's
a highway
for
OLDHAM*

BATTERIES
with power to spare

STARTER BATTERIES
BUS BATTERIES • TRACTION BATTERIES
OLDHAM & SON LTD • DENTON • MANCHESTER
ESTABLISHED 1865 • Tel.: Denton 2431
ALSO DEPOTS AT LONDON, BIRMINGHAM & GLASGOW



You can
always rely
on



MADE IN ENGLAND

for

- EASY STARTING
- SMOOTH RUNNING
- GREATER PETROL MILEAGE

A. C. SPHINX SPARKING PLUG CO. LTD • DUNSTABLE

FEW writers were more meticulous in the choice of words than Sir James M. Barrie. Rich in the knowledge of human nature and of the joys of life he wrote this of Craven Mixture:—

*"A Tobacco
to live for"*

CRAVEN MIXTURE

FINE CUT: For
smokers who prefer
a more compact fill.

Double BROAD
CUT: full strength
and deeply satisfying.

EXTRA MILD:
a "youthful" version, a
little less in strength.

All one price—2/10½ an ounce

CARRERAS • 150 YEARS REPUTATION FOR QUALITY



M. Gaston Bonvivant, lately of Paris (France) confesses himself a total convert to the excellence of our English cuisine. Particularly is his heart rejoiced by "le merveilleux lapin des Galles" (welsh rarebit to us). This, and a garnishment of what he calls Pon Yon, almost reconciles him to the loss of Cépes à la Bordelaise.

Pan Yan
MACONOCHEE BROS. LIMITED • LONDON

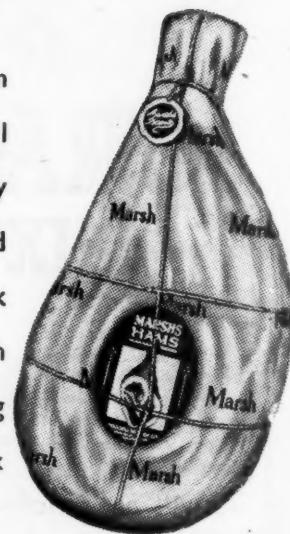
Now even Pan Yan is in rather short supply, but Gaston declares that un petit pain vaut mieux que rien.

THE FINEST HAM IN THE WORLD ...

MARSH'S HAM

• You can't get them now, but they will be produced again by Marsh's from sound well-bred stock reared by British Farmers. Something to which to look forward.

MARSH & BAXTER LTD., BRIERLEY HILL



TIME MARCHES
ON ...



IDRIS
THE QUALITY SOFT DRINK

IDRIS LIMITED, LONDON, MAKERS OF QUALITY TABLE WATERS THROUGH FIVE SUCCESSIVE REIGNS



Remember!
THE "AB" COOKER
IS WELL WORTH WAITING FOR



Regd. Design No. 837537

- Cooking and Water Heating combined in one unit.
- Big Fuel Economy Ensured through automatic fuel feed.
- Food Values Are Retained by balanced distribution of heat.
- High Temperatures Are Available at a moment's notice.



You Are Invited . . .
to visit the Demonstration Kitchen at the address below, and see how the "AB" Cooker works—also get advice on your wartime cooking problems.

Write for Free Illustrated Brochure to:
FEDERATED SALES LIMITED
(Dept. P.67) 80, GROSVENOR ST., LONDON, W.I.
Telephone: Mayfair 5084/6

COMBINING COOKING & WATER-HEATING

(Controlled by Federated Foundries, Limited)



BY ROYAL COMMAND

'Take a shop,' said the Prince, and Mr. Marcovitch, who, a hundred years ago, was making his cigarettes in an obscure room near Piccadilly, knew that their excellence had made him famous. Ever since, Marcovitch Cigarettes have been made to the same high standards as won the approval of that Eminent Personage and his friends; they are rolled of the very finest tobacco, for the pleasure of those whose palates appreciate perfection.



Marcovitch
BLACK AND WHITE
cigarettes for Virginia smokers

Flat 15 for 2/3 - 25 for 3/9
100 for 15/-

Also **BLACK AND WHITE**
SMOKING MIXTURE
2 oz. tin 5/10

ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LIMITED

WORKING FOR YOU AGAIN

Thirty thousand men and women of the NUFFIELD ORGANISATION are beginning to work for *you* again.

In a dozen great factories where tanks and guns thundered off to war, new cars and trucks are taking shape — finer cars and sturdier trucks for all the wealth of experience gained in six exacting years of conflict.

Because you bought so many of its motor-cars pre-war, the Nuffield Organisation has been able to pack a very powerful punch. It provided our fighting men with tens of thousands of tanks, armoured cars and guns. It was responsible for the repair of 80,000 aircraft.

Now it is returning to peace work and it conceives its main duty to be to supply the public with the maximum value for money in its products and at the same time to help its workers to a fuller and more healthy life.

The Nuffield Organisation has always taken a lead in making its workers shareholders in the commercial success of its operations. It pioneered holidays with pay, advanced medical, dental, welfare services and personnel management.

Because the Nuffield Organisation guards the interests of its workers, they can more happily and efficiently look after yours. They certainly give you a product you can trust.





GOOD THINGS

come by two and two —

Christmas and mincepies,

Soap and bubbles, frocks and frills,

Red lips and laughing eyes,

Books and music, paint and brush,

Ice and cantaloups,

Punch and Judy, stage and screen,

SYMINGTON'S AND SOUPS

W. SYMINGTON & CO. LTD.,
MARKET HARBOROUGH.

*A shoe
is as old
as it looks!*

With a daily beauty treatment of MELTONIAN CREAM, your shoes can look young and handsome to a ripe old age. MELTONIAN is a blend of the finest waxes, which nourish and preserve the leather, keeping it supple, and giving a bright lasting polish.

Help your shoes to last longer and look better—on a diet of MELTONIAN.

MELTONIAN

MELTONIAN LTD., OXGATE LANE, CRICKLEWOOD,
LONDON, N.W.2

*You may have to
wait for your
MOTOLUXE COAT—
but only the
lucky owner of
one can tell how
worth while
that is!*

MOTOLUXE
This is the label to look for!

★ Makers of the famous Motoluxe Rug.
LEE BROTHERS (OVERWEAR) LTD., QUEEN ST. WORKS, LONDON, N.W.1



What! No Polythene?

Assuming that you want to understand this advertisement we must first explain about polythene. Polythene is a new I.C.I. plastic product which results from subjecting certain gases to astronomically high pressures. It was a very important discovery and played a special part in Britain's war effort. Now about the steel tube; this is a new development in small bore tubes for super-high pressure work. It was so nearly perfect that (in secret session) even Accles & Pollock had to admit it. Without this tube there would have been no polythene in this country. No, not a bit. You see what a good thing it is to consult Accles & Pollock?

ACCLES & POLLOCK LTD.

Makers & manipulators of seamless tubes in Stainless & other Steels.

OLDBURY, BIRMINGHAM



"A Natural Choice . . .

and one I've remained loyal to right since the first fill. FOUR SQUARE for me every time, because it has no artificial flavouring, but is pure tobacco, made from the best leaf, matured and mellowed by ageing in the wood."

"VIRGINIAS"

RED SQUARES

A rich, matured, satisfying Virginia. Very cool and long-lasting -

per oz. 2/11

BROWN SQUARES

A fine cut Empire, shredded and toasted. Dark but soft flavour -

per oz. 2/7

YELLOW SQUARES

Similar style to Matured Virginia, but made from Empire leaf -

per oz. 2/7

PURPLE SQUARES

The ever-popular spun-cut. Little discs of tobacco ready for the pipe

per oz. 2/7

"MIXTURES"

BLUE SQUARES

A perfectly balanced mixture of finest Virginia and choicest Eastern tobaccos. Aromatic but not heady - per oz. 2/11

GREEN SQUARES

A mixture of the old Scottish type medium strength and cut Empire leaf -

per oz. 2/7

FOUR SQUARE

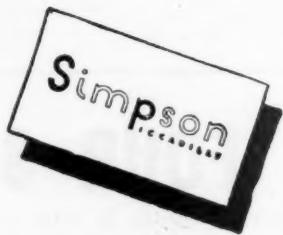
GEORGE DOBIE & SON LTD., PAISLEY, SCOTLAND

One of the few remaining independent Tobacco firms, established 136 years ago.



So central, so spacious,
such courteous attention—

That's what I like
about Simpson's!



SIMPSON (PICCADILLY) LTD • 202 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1 • REGENT 2002



You get it in the steaming fragrance of coffee just brewed . . . freshness which is heightened and enhanced when allied to that of crisp, appetising and satisfying McVitie & Price Biscuits.

McVITIE & PRICE LTD
Makers of High Quality Biscuits

EDINBURGH

LONDON

MANCHESTER



Werewolves, they say, can change themselves from bipeds to quadrupeds with the greatest of ease. But sheep are sheep the world over. However, we at Glastonbury have made discoveries during the war about sheepskin. We have learned how to make it so soft and silky that even an experienced ewe, the mother of six, could not tell her own lambkin's pelt after we have treated it. You wait! As soon as it's possible your Glastonbury's—overshoes, boots and slippers—will be softer, cosier, and daintier than ever.



MORLANDS
GLASTONBURY'S



REG. TRADE MARK

**LOOK smart
and
FEEL comfortable
in**

"VAN HEUSEN"
Semi-Stiff Collars Regd Trade Mark

and

"VANTELLA"
The Ideal Shirt for Men Reg'd.

Simply smart and comfortably easy, "VAN HEUSEN" collars and "VANTELLA" shirts are the choice of the well-dressed man. Specially woven on the curve, "Van Heusen" collars are "set" just right for comfort—that's the secret of their smartness.

Obtainable at any Men's Wear Shop or Outfitter but at present in short supply.

"VAN HEUSEN" by
HARDING, TILTON & HARTLEY, LTD.,
Taunton, Somerset.

"VANTELLA" by
COTELLA LIMITED,
137/8 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD,
LONDON, W.1



HEAD AND SHOULDERS ABOVE THE REST

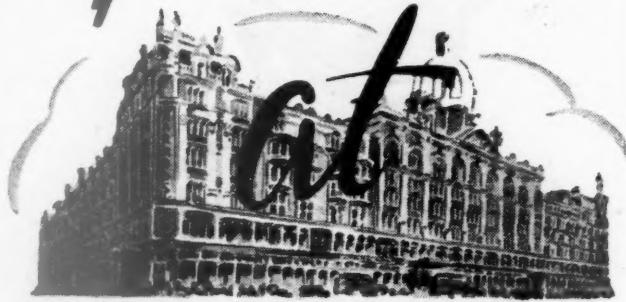
GREYS CIGARETTES

Just
honest-to-goodness
tobacco

Standard 20 for 2/4 Big 20 for 3/2

ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LIMITED

Get it



Harrods

**It pays you best
to buy the best**

HARRODS LTD LONDON SW1



**"... May I say how
much your tobacco is
esteemed out here?"**

"Germany,

2nd April, '45.

*"... May I say how much your tobacco is
esteemed out here? This order makes 9 lbs. this
year. Of course I haven't been able to smoke it
all myself, my comrades are forever on the borrow,
which makes certain inroads on my stock. Still,
it is one of the greatest single factors in making
them happy and I don't begrudge them it.*

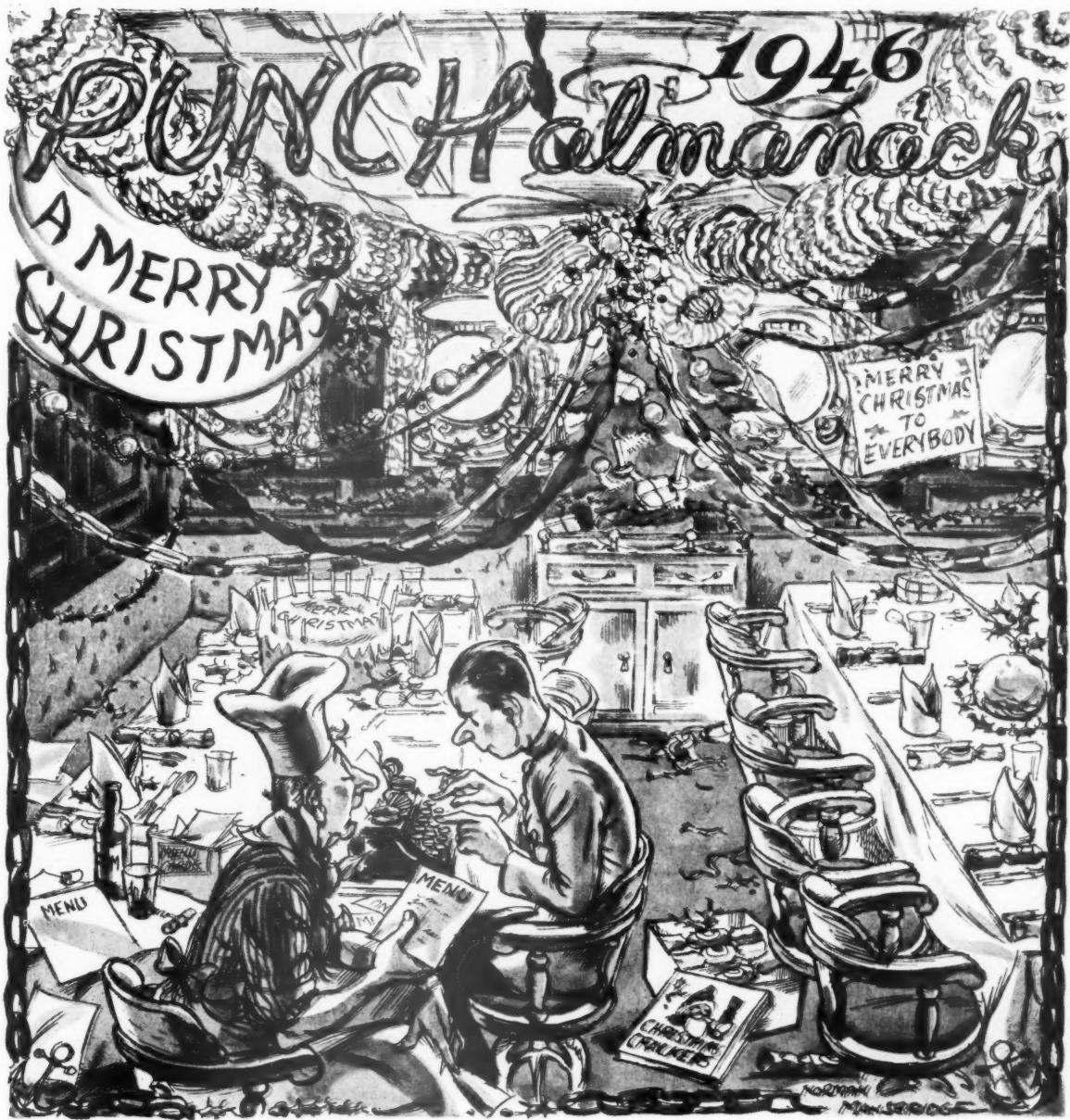
Sincerely yours,

*Sgt. _____, R.A.,
B.A.O.R."*

The originals of all testimony letters may be
inspected at the Barneys Bureau, 24, Holborn, E.C.4

**TRIBUTE TO JOHN SINCLAIR'S
Barneys**

★
Barneys (medium), Punchbowle (full), Parsons Pleasure (mild)
2/9½d. oz.
(286) MADE BY JOHN SINCLAIR LTD., BATH LANE, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE ®



"... PUT TODAY'S DATE ON THE TOP — IT'S DECEMBER 25TH ..."

January	February	March	April	May	June
S . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 M . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 TU . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 W . . . 9. 16. 23. 30 TH . . . 10. 17. 24. 31 F . . . 11. 18. 25. . . S . . . 12. 19. 26. . .	S . . . 3. 10. 17. 24. 31 M . . . 4. 11. 18. 25 . . . TU . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 . . . W . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 . . . TH . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 . . . F . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 . . . S . . . 9. 16. 23. 30 . . .	S . . . 3. 10. 17. 24. 31 M . . . 4. 11. 18. 25 . . . TU . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 . . . W . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 . . . TH . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 . . . F . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 . . . S . . . 9. 16. 23. 30 . . .	S . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 M . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 TU . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 W . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 TH . . . 9. 16. 23. 30 F . . . 10. 17. 24. 31 S . . . 11. 18. 25 . . .	S . . . 2. 9. 16. 23. 30 M . . . 3. 10. 17. 24 . . . TU . . . 4. 11. 18. 25 . . . W . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 . . . TH . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 . . . F . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 . . . S . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 . . .	
July	August	September	October	November	December
S . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 M . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 TU . . . 9. 16. 23. 30 W . . . 10. 17. 24. 31 TH . . . 11. 18. 25. . . F . . . 12. 19. 26. . . S . . . 13. 20. 27. . .	S . . . 4. 11. 18. 25 M . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 TU . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 W . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 TH . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 F . . . 9. 16. 23. 30 S . . . 10. 17. 24. 31	S . . . 1. 8. 15. 22. 29 M . . . 2. 9. 16. 23. 30 TU . . . 3. 10. 17. 24 . . . W . . . 4. 11. 18. 25 . . . TH . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 . . . F . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 . . . S . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 . . .	S . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 M . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 TU . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 W . . . 9. 16. 23. 30 TH . . . 10. 17. 24. 31 F . . . 11. 18. 25 . . . S . . . 12. 19. 26 . . .	S . . . 3. 10. 17. 24 M . . . 4. 11. 18. 25 TU . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 W . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 TH . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 F . . . 8. 15. 22. 29 S . . . 9. 16. 23. 30	S . . . 1. 8. 15. 22. 29 M . . . 2. 9. 16. 23. 30 TU . . . 3. 10. 17. 24. 31 W . . . 4. 11. 18. 25 . . . TH . . . 5. 12. 19. 26 . . . F . . . 6. 13. 20. 27 . . . S . . . 7. 14. 21. 28 . . .



1944

"It was just about here I hit that terrific drive to the seventeenth."

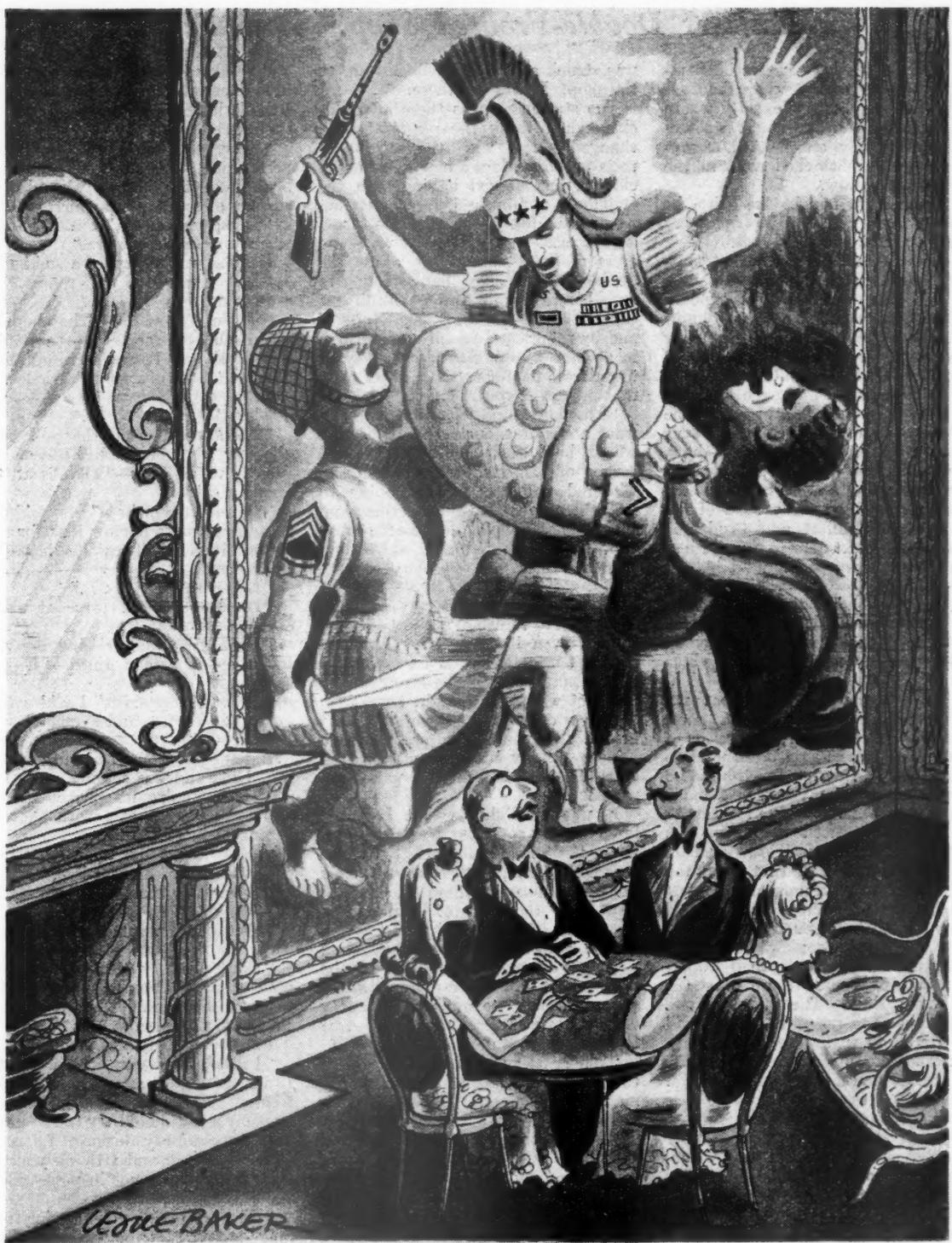


1945

"It was just about here I grew that two-foot marrow."

October 29 1945

PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946



"... Then in '43 the Americans took the place over as a battle-school."

Lost, A Double-Fronted Shop. Also . . .

A NYBODY who can give information as to the whereabouts—it is, but no, I know exactly where it is, if only I can find it. It is somewhere in the City, and it has a cream-coloured, collar-attached shirt in the right-hand window.

I would have bought the shirt the moment I saw it, but it was Saturday afternoon and the shop was closed, although its stocks, which were temptingly good for this sixth year of—this first year of peace, were exposed to the public view. Those who know the City of London on a Saturday afternoon will not be surprised to learn that I was the only member of the public present, and even I should not have been there except for a little mistake over buses in Waterloo Place.

But I came to this shop—how, doesn't matter—last Saturday afternoon, and it had a name over it which I find recorded on the tablets of my memory as "Buffett and Crudsby." There it was, next door to one of those little City stationer's full of scribbling-pads and pin-bowls, and there, in the right-hand corner of the window, was the cream-coloured, collar-attached shirt for which I have been searching all these years to wear with my blue suit.

I have never pretended that my street navigation is anything but poor, especially in the City, where as a young man years ago I often used to become lost during my lunch-hour, so in anticipation of my return I made concise mental notes of the location of the shop. I noticed that from the next corner it was possible to see part of the Guildhall, and that from the middle of the road opposite Buffett and Crudsby's a glimpse could be had of the top of St. Paul's; I also remembered a post office somewhere nearby, with a postman standing in the doorway, and of course there was the stationer's shop. The street names were so easy to remember that I did not trouble to write them down, with the result that I forgot them, but apart from that I had a sound knowledge of the locality.

This morning I went back.

It was an ordinary September morning, sunny but not too warm, with people walking hither and thither in a natural, ordinary way, and the fluff from the bomb-site weeds settling impartially on director and bank messenger alike. I had money in my pocket and a jotting of my collar-size in my diary. The only jarring note

was struck as I walked briskly up to the shop. It was not there.

The stationer's was there all right, although I think the pin-bowls had changed places with the scribbling-pads as the mark of a new week, and I clearly remembered having seen the Guildhall a minute before; stepping backwards into the road I was sure I should see—yes, there it was—the cross of St. Paul's. But where the double-fronted shop had stood two days before was now an establishment called the "Bluebird Lunch-lounge," and its proprietor, a sandy-haired man in a white apron, was already saying to me from the door, "Nice bit of roast mutton, sir, if you're quick."

"Thank you, no," I said. "I really want a cream-coloured shirt." And I stared hard through the right-hand corner of his window at a plate of withered pastries, vainly hoping to will them into de-transmogrification. I could not believe that Buffett and Crudsby had folded their shirts and silently stolen away. A year ago, perhaps, it would not have been so surprising for a strongly constructed shirt-shop to vanish over the week-end, though even in those days it would have been quick work for a sandy-haired man to offer roast mutton on the spot within forty-eight hours.

I drew off a pace or two and gazed in the stationer's window. After a minute I flashed a keen glance next door. The double-fronted shop had not returned.

It was unthinkable that I should have lost my way, but I wanted to be fair. I decided to start from the Guildhall again, and I walked back down two narrow alleys and turned right and right again. Suddenly I found myself outside the post office, and there was a postman still standing—or, at any rate, standing—in the doorway. I stopped in my tracks and turned through one hundred and eighty degrees, studying the surrounding buildings. No Buffett and Crudsby's.

"Where do you want to be?" asked the postman, transferring an empty mail-bag from one shoulder to the other.

"I'm looking for a double-fronted shirt," I said, only giving him a fraction of my attention.

"Where did you lose it?"

"I didn't lose it. It had," I explained absently, "a collar-attached, cream-coloured shop in the window."

"Just a minute," said the obliging man. He went into the inner gloom

and returned almost at once speaking in low tones to a policeman, who must, I think, have been standing by for just such an emergency.

"Now, sir," said the policeman, performing the ghost of a "knees bend" on the step—"who do you suspect of stealing this shirt, eh?"

"I suspect nobody," I said. "It was where the tea-rooms are."

He was writing, all of a sudden.

"Left shirt in tea-rooms," he muttered.

"No, no," I said. "The shop was where the tea-rooms are—a double-fronted shop. It was there on Saturday day, and now it's gone."

"The shop?"

"Yes."

"Then what," said the policeman, allowing his note-book hand to fall heavily to his side—"what is all this about a shirt?"

"It was in the shop."

He gave me a narrow look for such a broad man. Then he began to write again.

"Left shirt in shop . . ."

"I didn't leave it there at all," I said.

"Look," he said, raising his voice by about a minor third—"if your shirt——"

"It wasn't my shirt," I said wearily—"it was Buffett and Crudsby's. All I want——"

But the policeman had put away his note-book and was coming over to me slowly, buttoning his pocket securely and taking great care with the neat arrangement of the flap.

"Now then," he said, but quite gently—"where do you live, sir?"

"Near Brighton," I said—"but I——"

"Victoria, 'e wants," said the postman.

"You want Victoria," said the policeman. "You're making more towards Liverpool Street or London Bridge, do you know that?"

I removed his hand from my sleeve.

"I don't know why," I said, "when I ask to be directed to a double-fronted shop called Buffett and Crudsby's you should try to fob me off with three railway stations. I dare say you mean well, and I thank you, but you are obviously not in possession of the information I require."

"Oh, very well, if you're going to get hoity-toity," said the policeman in an injured tone, and with something that might almost have been a shrug he went back into the post office. The

postman shrugged unmistakably and followed.

Impatient at this unprofitable interlude I continued to retrace my steps towards the Guildhall, quite confident of my course, though taking care not to fall into my old trap of imagining London's streets to run in parallels. I had no difficulty whatsoever in finding my way this time, and I turned the last corner with a muffled exclamation of triumph.

It was premature. The Guildhall was not there.

I stared thunderstruck at the mammoth insurance building which had been erected in its place; then I turned and strode rapidly back to the post office. When I saw that it, too, had vanished—and this in a matter of mere minutes—I lost my head. I admit it. I began to plunge blindly through the courts and alleys and narrow streets. Even as I ran I could not but notice, however determinedly I averted my head, that landmark after landmark of my Saturday's visit had gone, and I might as well have been in the Catacombs for all the guidance my surroundings afforded me. It was with a great sob of relief that I debouched at last into the City Road, where I sat upon a low churchyard wall to recover my breath before making for my Kensington hotel by way of Tufnell Park. . . .

I had not dared to look back to see if St. Paul's still stood, but I am waiting for my evening paper now; I shall open it with a dank and trembling hand.

J. B. B.

Ship's Cat

ON board my Tank Landing Craft we have just acquired our seventeenth cat.

I don't mean that we have a total strength of seventeen cats borne on the ship's books at present. We have rarely had more than one at a time, like signalmen and motor mechanics. But the crew is quite firm on the point that there must always be a cat.

To look at the average L.C.T. rating you would not credit him with a particularly motherly disposition. He tends rather to two-day beards, forceful language, and outspoken views on the rights of the down-trodden matelot. But confront him with a cat and he is transformed into a sort of sea-going Mother Machree.

I have had an outraged cox'n come storming up into my cabin to invoke official vengeance on a thoughtless

rating who had yanked his hammock out of the nets "just as the little chap was getting his 'ead down on it." And there was once a neat fission between the Port Watch and the Starboard Watch over the question of a bow for the neck of Tiddles (Number Eight), Starboard Watch being for it to a man, and Port Watch considering it crooky to dumb animals. Starboard Watch won on a vote being taken (Starboard Watch has one hand more than Port), and the unfortunate Tiddles spent most of the forenoon watch sitting cursing on the capstan with a plaited wisp of cotton-waste round her neck, the Starboard Watch standing around in attitudes of devotion and admiration.

I will not enumerate all the cats we have had. They number, as I say, seventeen, which must be considerably over the establishment. I don't remember them all myself, except for the first, which was a member of the ship's company when I took over, and which wounded my feelings bitterly by deserting next day. Later I discovered that this was a habit among our cats, and I was soothed.

But when it was recently discovered that we were short of our sixteenth cat steps were at once taken to fill the vacancy. My crew scoured the neighbourhood in quest of a suitable recruit. Young A.B. Short was the first to return, nursing a struggling black-and-white cat in his arms.

"A pore little stray what I found a-mewling for milk, sir," said Short tenderly. "Went to my 'art to see 'im, it did. All right to keep 'im on board, sir?"

Before I could answer, an irate deputation arrived from a sister-ship to claim the waif, whom apparently they had observed in the act of being adopted off their quarter-deck. It was seven—and the cat—to one. We did not keep the cat.

The Cox'n was the next hunter to report back. He had with him an elderly animal with a mangy skin and a bleary eye. The Cox'n, in an excess of enthusiasm, alluded to it as "Kitty." The crew went into committee, and the Cox'n's nominee was unanimously black-balled. It went back to the wharf with a tinned pilehard in its mouth by way of consolation. (The First Lieutenant had had a night ashore, and wasn't in the mood for breakfast.)

Tug Wilson, my Leading Stoker, was the third to return. He did not bring a cat with him, but he brought a policeman. It took a stiff gin and twenty Duty-frees to convince the policeman that we were not running

the craft as a black-market fur-factory.

When the others came back, empty-handed but describing glowingly the ones that had got away, I felt it necessary to clear lower-decks and explain that the crew's thirst for a cat had to be kept within bounds. Most cats, I pointed out, had owners, especially all the most desirable cats. Gash cats were few and far between. Cats could be presented to us, or sold to us, or even won by us at games of comparative chance, but cats were in no circumstances to be knocked off. The crew said "Yes, sir," with reverence and went straight off and found seven more cats.

I discharged the seven cats and administered seven bottles. Then Blue, the acting cook, remembered that he had had a party in this port a year ago, and this party went a bundle on cats, and would infallibly be able to put him in touch with one.

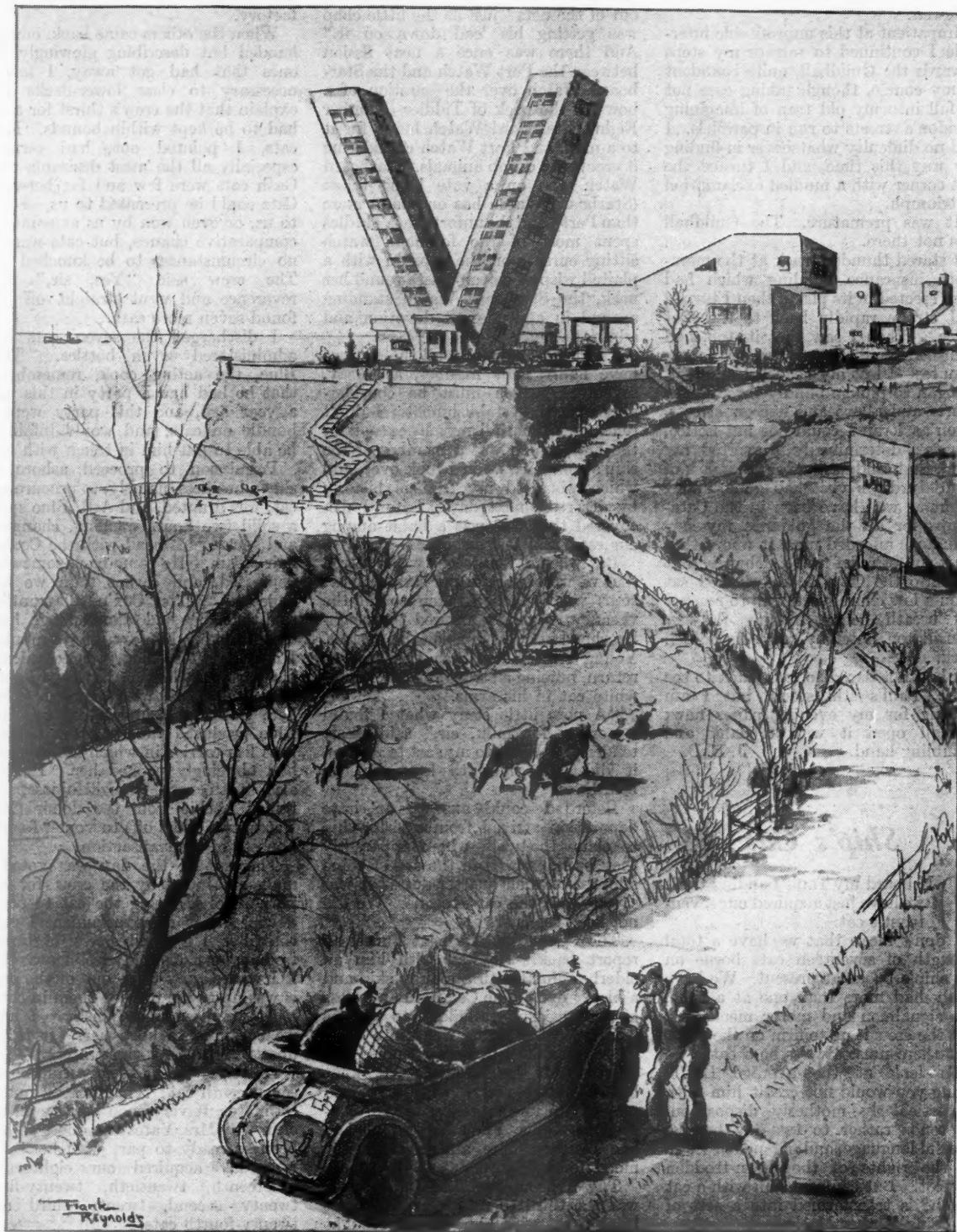
Permission to proceed ashore on ship's business, namely, to procure one cat, was granted, and A.B. Blue spent a solid two hours washing, changing, and sousing his head with the Cox'n's hair-cream. He came back somewhat depressed, and earlier than we had expected. (The Cox'n, disgruntled, said that Blue had taken enough hair-cream to keep him away for a month.) His party, it seemed, was technically his party no longer, having recently got hitched up with a pongo. She had, however, found a cat for him. Blue produced the cat from the old bass fish-carrier in which his ex-party had obligingly packed her. He had also, with rare thoughtfulness, obtained a chit from the donor (Mrs. Yates, two doors off) to vouch for the honesty of the transaction.

The rest of the day was voted a make-and-mend by the crew for the purpose of assisting the cat to settle down. After some argument I even contributed a small smear of butter from my own dish. My feeling was that if I wanted any work out of the crew it was up to me to keep them in cats.

Anyway, we kept Whisky. I hope we continue to keep her. It is too unsettling to be without a cat.

Did I say we had just acquired our seventeenth cat? That was an underestimate. It very soon became all too clear why Mrs. Yates two doors off had been so ready to part with her. We yesterday acquired our eighteenth, nineteenth, twentieth, twenty-first, twenty-second, twenty-third and twenty-fourth cats.

It's no use expecting the crew to do any work now. They are all far too busy acting as nursemaids.



"Can you direct me to the Victory Hotel?"



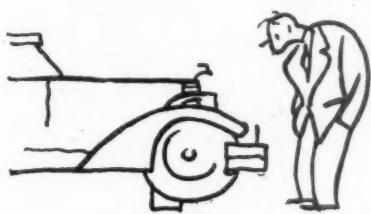
I remember quite clearly saying that I'd never complain again about trivial discomforts—



and I remember saying that I'd never complain again about food—



I remember remarking that I'd never complain again about other people's incompetence—



and I remember declaring that I'd never complain again about the fag of taking the car out—



I remember vowing that I'd never complain again about the way the house was run—



and I remember announcing that I'd never complain again about the number of taxis and buses cluttering up the streets—



then I remember saying that I'd never complain again about being kept awake at night by little noises outside in the street—



I remember saying that I'd never complain again about not being able to afford to own a great big house of my own—



and I remember saying that I'd never complain again about not having large enough fires in it—

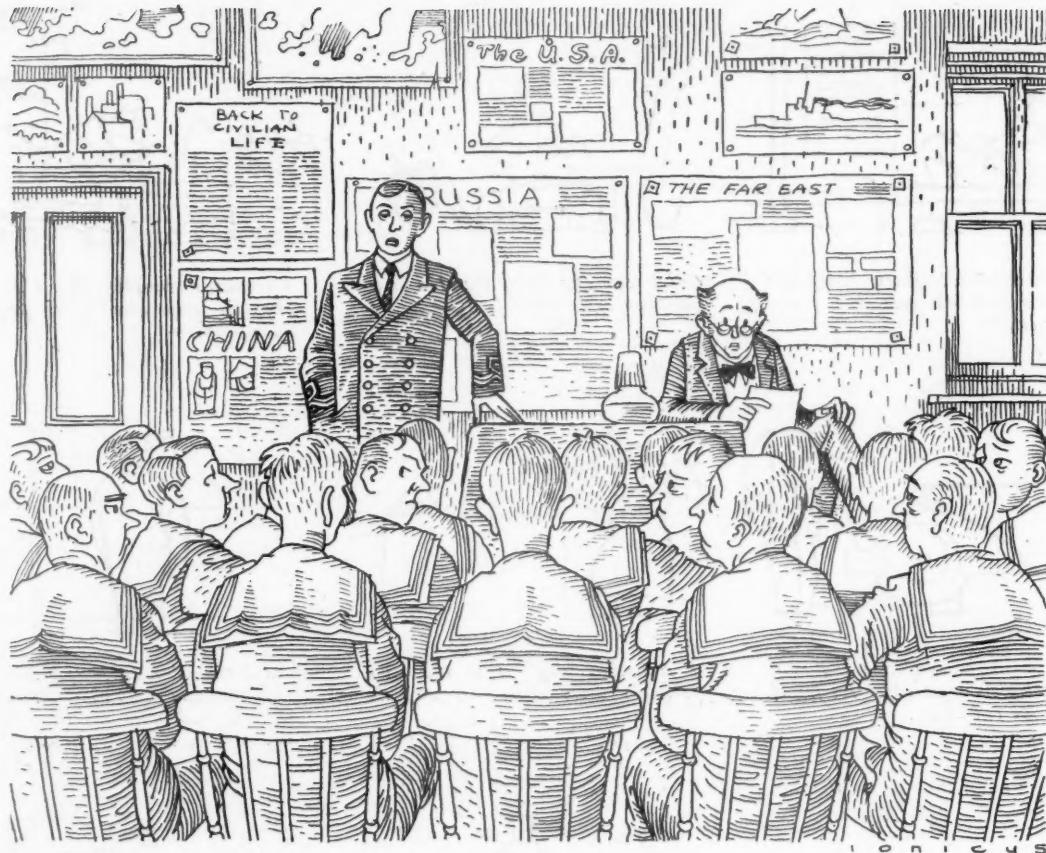


I remember saying that I'd never complain again about the dullness of existence—



and I perfectly remember saying that I'd never complain again about anything at all—

but I NEVER said I wouldn't complain again about the frightful hardship of not being able to complain again.



"Continuing our demobilization lectures, we have Mr. Pratt talking on 'The Sea as a Career'."

Piedish, Goldilocks, and the Three Beers

To the casual and uninstructed observer "Panther" Piedish might have seemed to be asleep. The truth was that the end of the war had given him more chances than he had had in the previous six years for practising an accomplishment universally agreed to be useful: waking up at a given time, without being called. Whole days he would spend, in his small but sumptuously-furnished office in the "Admin." building of the M.I.5 barracks at X—, doing absolutely nothing but wake up at previously-decided times—except of course go to sleep first. (If you understand me.)

Thus we see that the casual and uninstructed observer, in taking him to be asleep on this occasion, would have been, in a sense—in every sense—right; but only just.

The observer in question was an attractive young woman with golden hair, who stood (by some mismanagement) at the elbow of the M.I.5 corporal as he threw open the door of the office and announced "The missing agent is here, sir."

Piedish woke up with a start and felt about under his desk for his shoes.

"Show her out," he said hoarsely. "I mean in."

The girl entered with an undulating walk, sat down, and began to pull some papers out of her bag.

"There," she said, handing him one. "I believe that's what you've been looking for."

Piedish was still weaving his feet about in search of shoes, but he managed to lean forward and take it.

"Ha!" he said. "The missing declaration of war! How long have you had this?"

"Three years," Goldilocks replied simply.

"You'd swear that?"

"Certainly."

Piedish gnawed a thumb (one of his own). "This puts us in a very embarrassing situation," he observed. "Pentagonia is now in a position to say . . ." He gnawed his thumb again. "What about the trade pact, have you thought of that?"

"I thought you were Admin.", the young lady said.
"Do you have to sweat about these things?"

"We have our own methods in M.I.5."

She pushed up her hair at the back and said "Adjutants have changed since my day."

"What do you know about adjutants?" asked Piedish, feeling a twinge of what might have been jealousy.

"Oh," she said, "I get around."

Piedish went back to considering the paper. "But you don't seem to realize," he said. "As we never got this, we let them alone. Anything they did to us counted as an accident. This puts them in the position of having held out against the full might of the British Empire for three years without the slightest ill-effects. Where have you been all this time? Why didn't you follow me straight back with this when you got it in '42?"

"It's a complicated story," she said, looking faintly troubled. "Shall I begin at the beginning?"

"Good God, no. Do you want us to be here all day?"

She gave him a cold look and said "You remember that café where we sat on the *terrasse* in 1942 and you ordered three beers while we waited for the man you insisted on calling the Emissary?"

"Yes. There was a big beer for me, a middle-sized beer for you, and a little, small, wee—"

"Well," the girl interrupted in a tone of distaste, "you may be interested to hear that they're still there."

"The three beers?"

"Yes. The remains of them."

"What on earth for?"

"It seems they didn't trust you."

Piedish looked pleased.

"They took it for granted," she went on, "that no Englishman would leave three perfectly good beers undrunk without some deep motive."

"They were quite right," Piedish said pompously. "It was part of a scheme. I forgot the details," he added hastily, fearing she was about to ask him for them.

"Look," she said. "You remember why you ordered three beers, don't you?"

"Sort of code, wasn't it?"

"Yes. The Emissary was to sit down and if he drank, you took his paper. Well, he never did sit down. You had to go and start a fight. As I remember, you had a fine time in the confusion knocking various people out, and then I never saw you again until now. Was that part of the scheme, too?"

Piedish rose impatiently and said "Enough of this." Finding he had on only one shoe, he sat down again. "The important point is . . ." He picked up a telephone and dialled. "Hullo? Oh, look, that declaration of war's turned up. What shall—What? Who? Then put him on, for goodness' sake! Hullo? Oh, the Pentagonian declaration of war's turned up. Yes. Yes, very awkward. I suppose so. Yes. Oh, well, if it has to b— Yes. All right."

He hung up, and said "You and I have got to go to Pentagoria."

"But I've only just come back!"

The corporal (by some mismanagement) was still hanging about. "It only shows," he observed. "If the young lady had stayed there a little longer she needn't have moved, in a manner of speaking."

"Corporal," said Piedish, "go and get me a clearance chit, and don't come back without it."

"Aye, aye, sir." (They have their own methods in M.I.5.)

It is not a long journey to Pentagoria by air. On the way Goldilocks gave to Piedish a full explanation of why

she had not been able to return before; but it may be omitted, for we shouldn't have been able to understand it either. Then she said "I still don't see what we're up to now."

"What we have to do," he said, "is to put this paper back where you got it, let them discover in our presence that it's still there, and so restore the *status quo*."

"Oh." She thought for a moment. "Well, this doesn't make it any easier. I found it in one of those beers."

"In one?"

She took a deep breath. "Look. The party broke up before the Emissary arrived, didn't it?"

"You might put it like that," said Piedish modestly.

"I'm positive no one came near the table while I was there, but I'm not sure what happened while you were hitting people. When the shooting started I crawled off inside. I tore my last pair of— Anyway, when I got back to the table this was in the biggest beer. At first I thought it was the bill."

"Why isn't it wet?" asked Piedish shrewdly.

"It was in a waterproof cover. For that matter I hardly imagine the beers are still wet, either. They've got a little sort of glass dome over them but I'm sure they must have evaporated years ago."

Piedish exploded: "Then why on earth are they being preserved?"

"I told you, they were suspicious. And they've made the whole thing a sort of Perfidious-Albion exhibit. I hope you're not expecting to be popular."

"I never courted popularity," said Piedish in a dignified tone, looking out of the window at the Pentagonian river Muc, which was then coming into sight and looked just—I'm sorry to have to mention this—like a silver thread.

"The point is," she said, "can you refrain from starting a fight long enough for us to—"

"Certainly I can! Besides, I don't start fights. They are forced on me . . . I don't know why we didn't come in disguise, anyway."

"I had three years of pretending to be someone else and when I go back now I'm going back as—"

"All right, all right."

For the rest of the journey they spoke very little; but the glowering looks they received from the passport officials and other Pentagonian minions when they arrived drew them, as the saying is, together. As they approached the café they were almost friendly.

They stopped on the other side of the road and examined the scene unobtrusively.

"You can see the table now," the girl said.

It stood in a prominent position between two tubs with small withered trees in them. The three beer-glasses could be clearly seen under their dome, like wax fruit. Against it was leaning a card bearing words in the Pentagonian tongue.

"What does that say?"

"It's all about Perfidious Albion, I told you."

"It's extraordinary how everything's just the same as when I left, except for that," observed Piedish. "The street looks exactly the same. Even he's the same," he added, indicating a man at the next table who was eating what appeared to be a wasp's nest. "Everything is identical. We might almost be victims of that odd chronological phenomenon known as 'a stitch in time.' I can even see that villainous-looking waiter who served us, I believe."

"Well, we'd better keep out of his way. Where?"

"Inside, at the bar. He won't notice. There's another man serving the tables."

There was a pause. Then Piedish went on gloomily

"Blowed if I see any way of doing this, all the same. Why didn't you explain how impossible it would be?"

"Well, I like that! You didn't say what you wanted to do till we were in the plane!"

"Oh, well, can't be helped." He frowned. "What we need is a plan. Suppose you go to the table at the other side—No." He thought again. "Suppose I go to the table at—No."

"Careful," said Goldilocks suddenly. "That waiter's looking over here." She pulled him back into the doorway of a tobacconist's shop, taking no notice of the warning cry from inside: "Only Russian, green cigars, or rosewater for hookahs!"

"Look," said Piedish. "Suppose I create a distraction in the middle of the road along here. Everybody in the café crowds to one side to look. Meanwhile you slink along behind them, lift that dome, drop the paper in the glass again, and that's done. Afterwards we can arrange the discovery scene."

"It might work," she said doubtfully. "What sort of distraction are you—"

"Oh," he said briskly, "I can always start a fight."

He gave her the paper, inflated his chest, stepped out into the road and began to look about for provocation.

But he had forgotten the villainous-looking waiter, who had indeed recognized the distinctive figure of the customer who had given such trouble in 1942. This man now came bustling out of the café, rubbing his hands on his apron. He trotted up behind Piedish and tapped him on the shoulder.

Piedish whirled round, hopeful of being able to start his fight immediately; but the appearance of the waiter surprised him. Goldilocks watched anxiously from the doorway and was astounded to see that Piedish was actually allowing himself to be drawn into serious conversation (in the middle of a road in which tar-spraying was in progress) with the waiter, who was flourishing something white and apparently becoming more and more worked up.

At last Piedish could be seen saying "Wait here a minute," and he left the middle of the road and came back to the doorway.

Waving aside the man in charge of the tar-boiler (who wished to converse on topics of the day), the waiter followed at a little distance, rubbing his hands on his apron, and stood on the pavement behind Piedish as he was saying to the girl: "Extraordinary thing. All he seems to want is money."

"Money?"

"The beers were never paid for. That's what's been rankling all these years—they're a grasping lot, these Pentagonians. This chap doesn't seem to think they have

been at war with us, by the way; he says it was never announced. Are you sure that paper you had—Let me see it again."

He lifted her shoulder-bag and held it while she pulled out the paper.

"This," he read, unfolding it, "is to certify that . . . My dear girl, this is only a rough draft. There's no signature. Why didn't you point that out?"

"Why didn't you notice it yourself?" she retorted.

"I was busy with other things," said Piedish, thinking of his shoes. "Never mind. Well, that settles that." He grew quite cheerful. "Now all that remains is the little matter of—er—" He was still holding her bag, and hesitatingly began to feel inside it. "I forgot to change any money. Could you possibly lend—"

"Well," she exploded, "of all the— Dragging me out here again for absolutely— And on top of everything else you ask for—"

"So if you could—" Piedish murmured, turning on what he believed to be his charm.

She wrenched her bag out of his grasp and walked swiftly off.

"Hi!" he called, without much hope. She gave no sign of having heard.

There was nothing for it but to start another fight; which he did. In the end he got away without paying after all, and he's now back in his office, practising how to wake up at a given time.

"And ever since then," he will say, telling the story (with omissions), "I've called her *la belle dame sans 'Merci'*—the beautiful lady who snatched."

R. M.

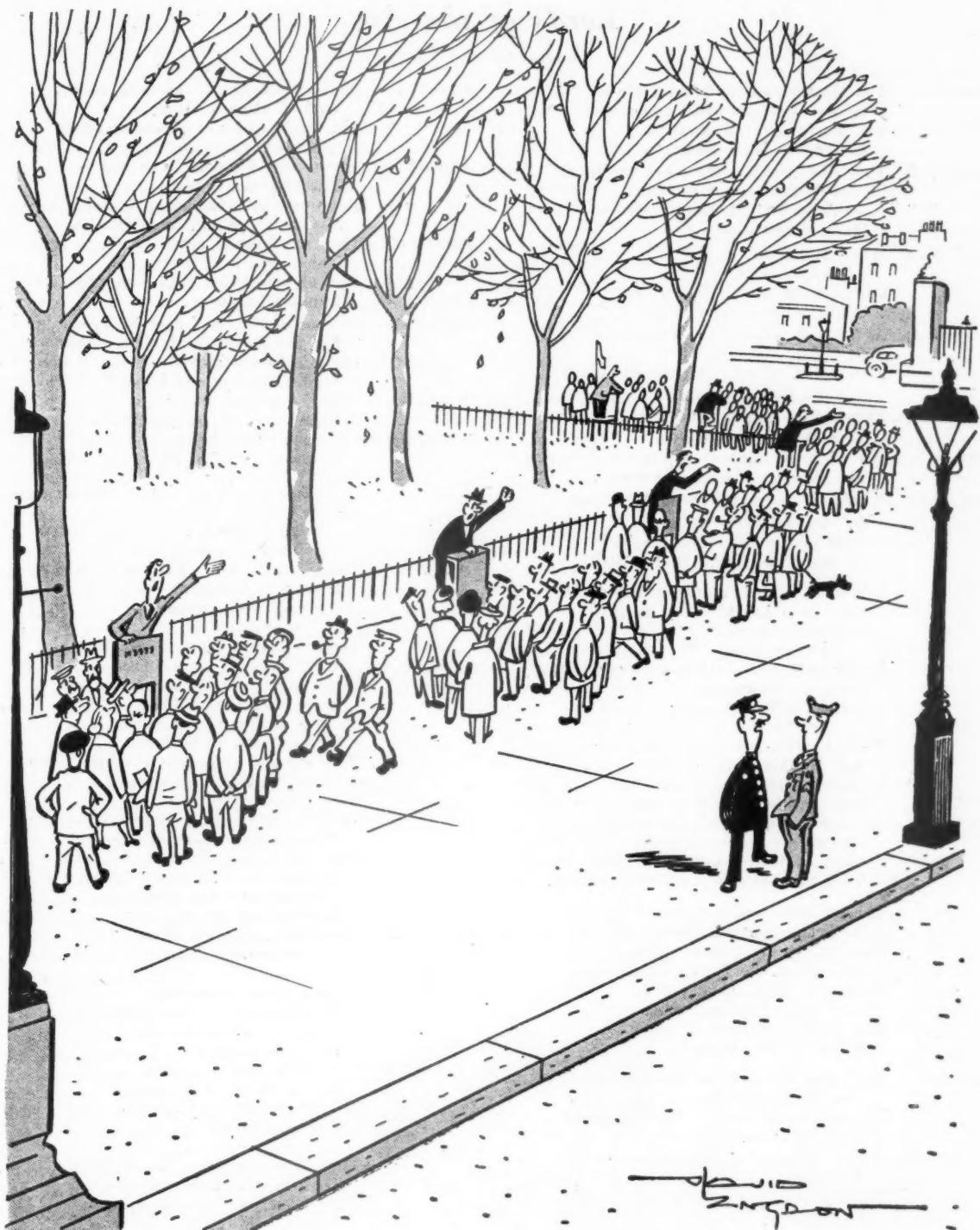
Thought for December 28

MY calendar's heavily circled to-day.
Returns and certificates, year-end reports,
Agenda, addenda of various sorts,
With schedules and programmes, results of inspections,
Directives, *directifs* and even directions.
For long have I saved them, to send them away
On this—the preantepenultimate day.

"The Headmaster (Mr. A. R. Stedman) said he finished up last term with 2½ members short in staff. He had been trying to fill the vacancies, but with one exception that had proved an impossibility."—*Wiltshire paper*.

We can imagine.





"Yes, it's supposed to act as a sort of safety valve, otherwise they'd all be sittin' at home or goin' to the pictures, or somethin'."

Lords of the Air

Fantasia for Five Voices

First Voice. The Heathen in his blindness
 Bowed down to wood and stone,
 But we in our refinedness.
 Prefer the Microphone.

Second Voice. That Listeners like the jokes we share,
 And don't account us bores,
 Is obvious I think from their
 Co-operative snores.

Third Voice. When I was out in Papua,
 I recollect a chap
 Complaining that a British Tar
 Could never shut his trap.

Fourth Voice. As Darwin proved to Wilberforce
 In 1863,
 Although that may be true of course,
 It's not Biology.

Second Voice. Philosophers might say the foot
 Was in the other shoe.

Fifth Voice. If I might be allowed to put
 The Woman's point of view . . .

First Voice. To clinch the matter, would you say . . .

Second Voice. In view of where we are,
 I think my answer would to-day
 Be more like Blah! Blah! Blah!

Tutti. It's there again! We're on the Air again!
 Give us a break!
 Women, awake!
 Kiddies, hullo!

Think hard again! Drop us a card again!
 Huxley is humming!
 Campbell is coming!
 Joady-oh-doh!

There'll always be a Brains Trust,
 And thinking will be fun
 So long as Running Commenta-
 tors sparkle while they run.
 So long as Campbell's low-brow,
 So long as Huxley's high;
 So long as Joad can take the load,
 Your thought-streams won't run dry.

There'll always be a Brains Trust,
 With this proviso, please—
 That you're the Beneficiaries,
 And we're the Brains Trustees.
 So long as men ask questions
 And women wonder why,
 The B.B.C. will find in me
 A star to steer them by.

First Voice. Well, here is one from Sergeant Hughes—
 The Durham Light A.C.—
 Who writes to know, "Do kangaroos
 Take sugar in their tea?"

Second Voice. Surely, they do, or they do not,
 According as our views
 Diverge as to precisely what
 Is meant by "kangaroos."

Third Voice. I know that goats in Ecuador
 Eat salt with Soya Bean;
 And several walrus off the Nore
 Were fond of saccharine.

First Voice. That's interesting. Turning, then,
 To Mrs. Page, of Rye,
 She wants to know precisely when
 A Welkin rings, and why.

Second Voice. A year ago, I should have said
 Ti-tumty-tumty-tum;
 But now that Humanism is dead,
 My answer would be "Hum!"

Third Voice. They say hyenas never laugh,
 Unless you feed them glue;
 And niggers think that a giraffe . . .

Fourth Voice. Is not a kangaroo.

Fifth Voice. Of course, I know I may be wrong,
 But don't you think that—zoom—
 We sometimes think too much of bong,
 And not enough of boom?
 Unless a kangaroo has got
 Some sense of comradeship . . .

Second Voice. Of course, it all depends on what
 Is meant by Pip, Pip, Pip.

Tutti. It's there again! We're on the air again!
 Give us a break!
 Women, awake!
 Kiddies, hullo!

Think hard again. Drop us a card again.
 Huxley is humming—
 Campbell is coming—
 Joady-oh-doh!

There'll always be a Brains Trust
 To stoke your mental fire—
 Your Court of Ultimate Appeal—
 Your ex-Cathedra Choir—
 So long as there's a Listener,
 Or Listeners, to be found
 Who want to know where Praties grow
 Or why a Wheel goes round.

There'll always be a Brains Trust,
 With this proviso, please—
 That you're the Beneficiaries,
 And we're the Brains Trustees.
 So long as men ask questions
 And women wonder why,
 The B.B.C. will find in me
 A star to steer them by.

So long as any thinking
 Is sanctioned by the State—
 So long as any virgin soil
 Is left to violate—
 So long as any questions
 Are given us to discuss,
 To any question put by you
 The answer will be Us.

There'll always be a Brains Trust,
 To keep you from despair—
 Your Court of Cultural Appeal—
 Your Castle on the Air.
 Till there's a State-planned Service
 To serve you day and night,
 At least there'll be the B.B.C.
 To serve the nation right.

P. B.

Das Pongo

IT is time that an explanation—I would not say an apology—was made of the naval use of the word Pongo to describe the soldier. As Staff Liaison Officer (Pongoes)—short title SLOP—no one is better fitted to write this than myself, the whole of whose war-life has been devoted to the task of making soldiers intelligible in their thoughts, words and deeds to simple sailors.

It is not that the Navy really absolutely looks *down* on soldiers: the similarity between the words "Dago" and "Pongo" does not mean that we think of the Brown Shapes as little excitable olive-skinned panickers or anything like that. On the contrary, it is rather their reliability, not to say rigidity, of mind, their love of loud noises such as heel-clicking, their immature and unguarded manner of drinking and their addiction to corduroy trousers and Society blood-sports that stand out as generic peculiarities calling for a group-name that the word "Pongo," we feel, appropriately covers. It is virtually, one might say, a term of affection. More like "Jumbo" or "Bonzo" or even "Jingo" than Dago. For instance, one often hears the Navy say what would we do without the Pongoes, and it is quite true that without them we should be much less occupied and have a sense, as it were, almost of loss; and who can say fairer than that?

Of course we have our Diehards, our Boffins, our Coracle-men, but they are not really representative. When Commodore Fowle-Anker's daughter got engaged to a man in the Rifle Brigade the other day and the old boy, nearly bursting his wing-collar with indignation, publicly threatened to cut her off with a shilling, we all thought he was going a bit too far, and that a severe reprimand ought to have met the case. Commander Davit, who is very Left-wing and pale blue, had the temerity to intervene and said that he'd known of several mixed marriages which had turned out quite happily. It was left to Third Officer "Bung" McKillick, who has tact, to remark that perhaps he was only a Temporary officer, and might quite soon stop being a Pongo, and wouldn't that be all right. The Commodore was mollified, but it took three extra gins to bring him back from off-purple to his sub-scarlet norm.

Naval Party 20000 (which as you know is the *nom-de-théâtre* of a most distinguished Staff) is in a position to

be less narrow-minded about soldiers than most of the Service, because Bad Sauerkraut is only a few miles away from Bad Wurst, where there is an equally important Army H.Q., to say nothing of Mil. Gov., etc., and so we see lots of presumably outstanding and hand-picked brown. They *must* be outstanding because nearly all of them are at least brigadiers, which means almost the same thing as if you found a naval Staff composed of commanders and above, and you can imagine how important that would be. There was a lot of confusion over all these brigadiers at first because some *saboteur* started the rumour that if soldiers had red hat-bands it meant that they knew shorthand too: and Commodore Fowle-Anker and his cronies all believed this and made some erroneous remarks at inter-Service meetings. It took all my powers of liaison to fix this trouble, and I had to arrange a guest-night and invite fifty assorted brigadiers before it was finally healed. But what a healing! From the moment when they crossed the quarter-deck saluting like mad and sucking in naval atmosphere, to the moment some hours later when they re-crossed it having sucked in naval exhilarants, the whole thing was strictly a wow. Starting with stock

remarks like "Your Wrens are *wonderful*," which we and the Wrens know by long practice how to sublimate, they passed rapidly and smoothly to the next characteristic phase, which consists of uttering loud and supposedly nautical proprietary cries such as "Shiver my anchor!" and "Abaft the rudder!" After a little more inhalation and a short course in sea-shanties, which they adore, we then in accordance with standard drill introduced them to a few ward-room romps, designed to make them malleable at the close of play, and the evening reached its happy conclusion without any trouble at all.

I would have liked to tell you more of this, but the Marine corporal has just called to say that my brother has arrived on a surprise visit. I must act with cunning and celerity and whisk him off to my cabin as inconspicuously as possible, concealing his arrival, his presence, his (I hope) early departure, and above all his relationship. My brother is a Pongo.

• •

"... if unobtainable locally we will send
a TRIAL PACKET OR 1/9 or 5/- post free."
Advertisement.

Thanks. We'll have the 5/-.



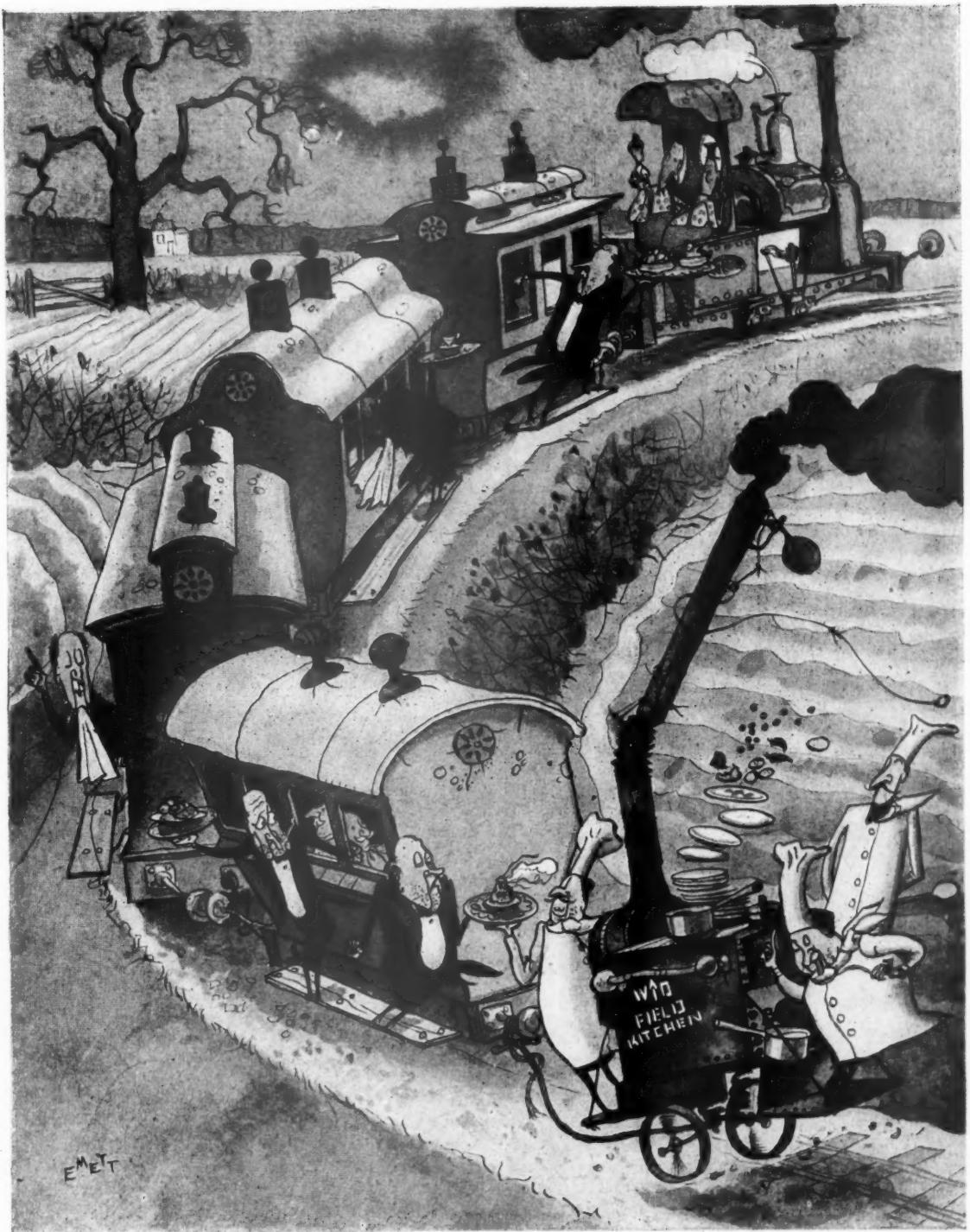
"Farmer Furrow will see the next inspector now."



BUSMAN'S HOLIDAY

October 29 1945

PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946



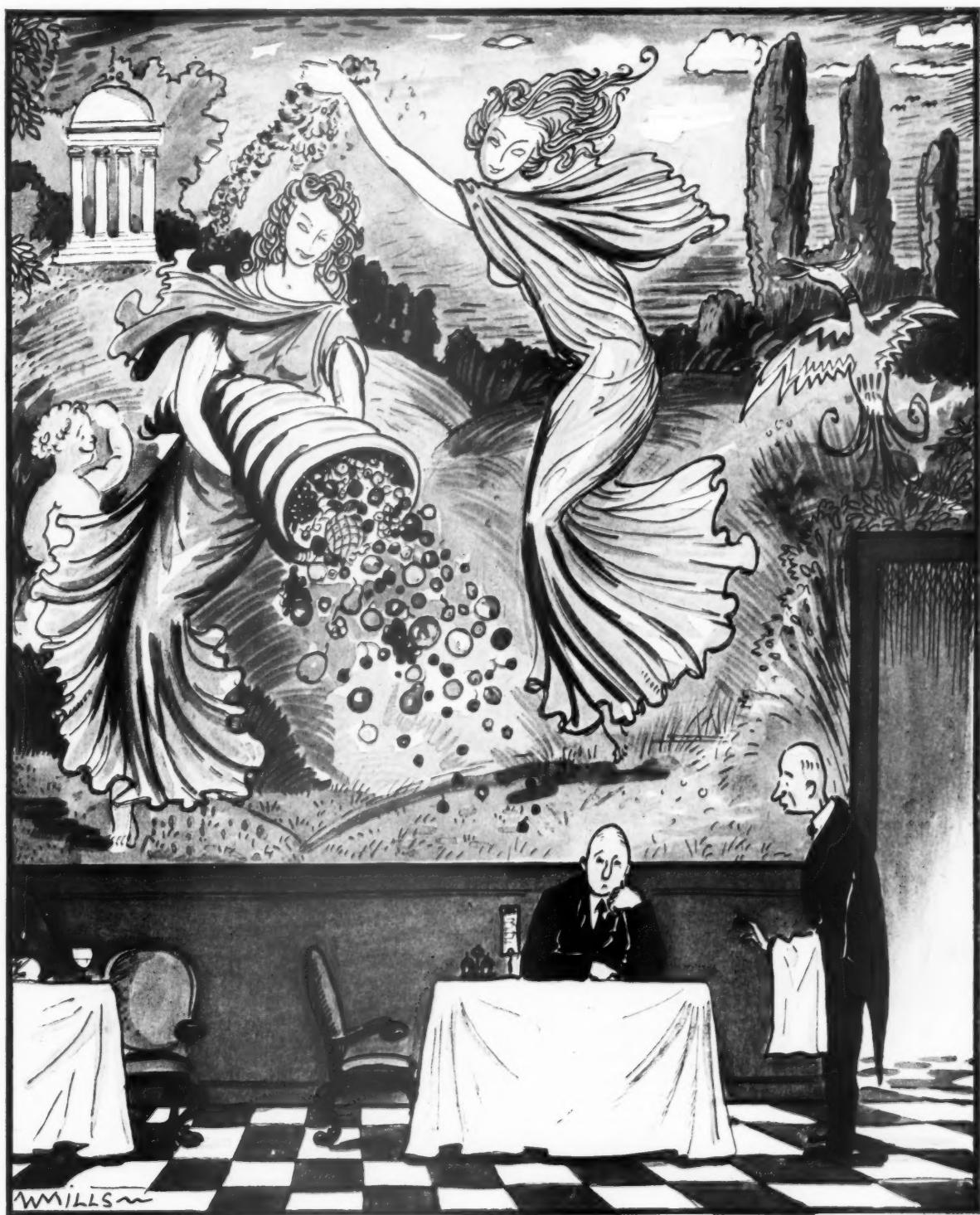
"Despite the severe depletion of equipment and rolling stock, the Company will do all in its power to resume meals on the trains."



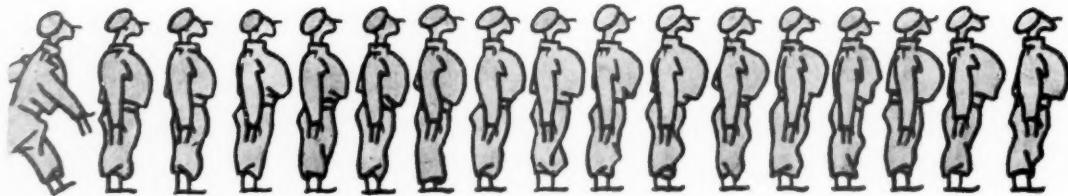
"'Ere, not so much soul, Charlie. You're just the ruddy accompaniment!"'

October 29 1945

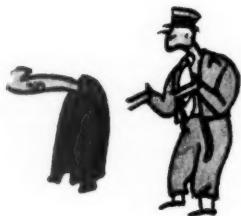
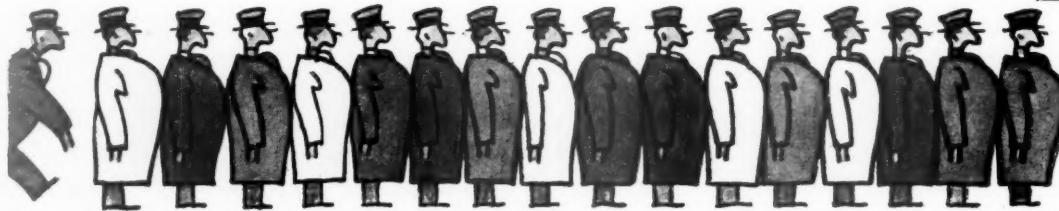
PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946



"Bless you, no, Sir. Whatever put the idea of fruit salad into your head!"

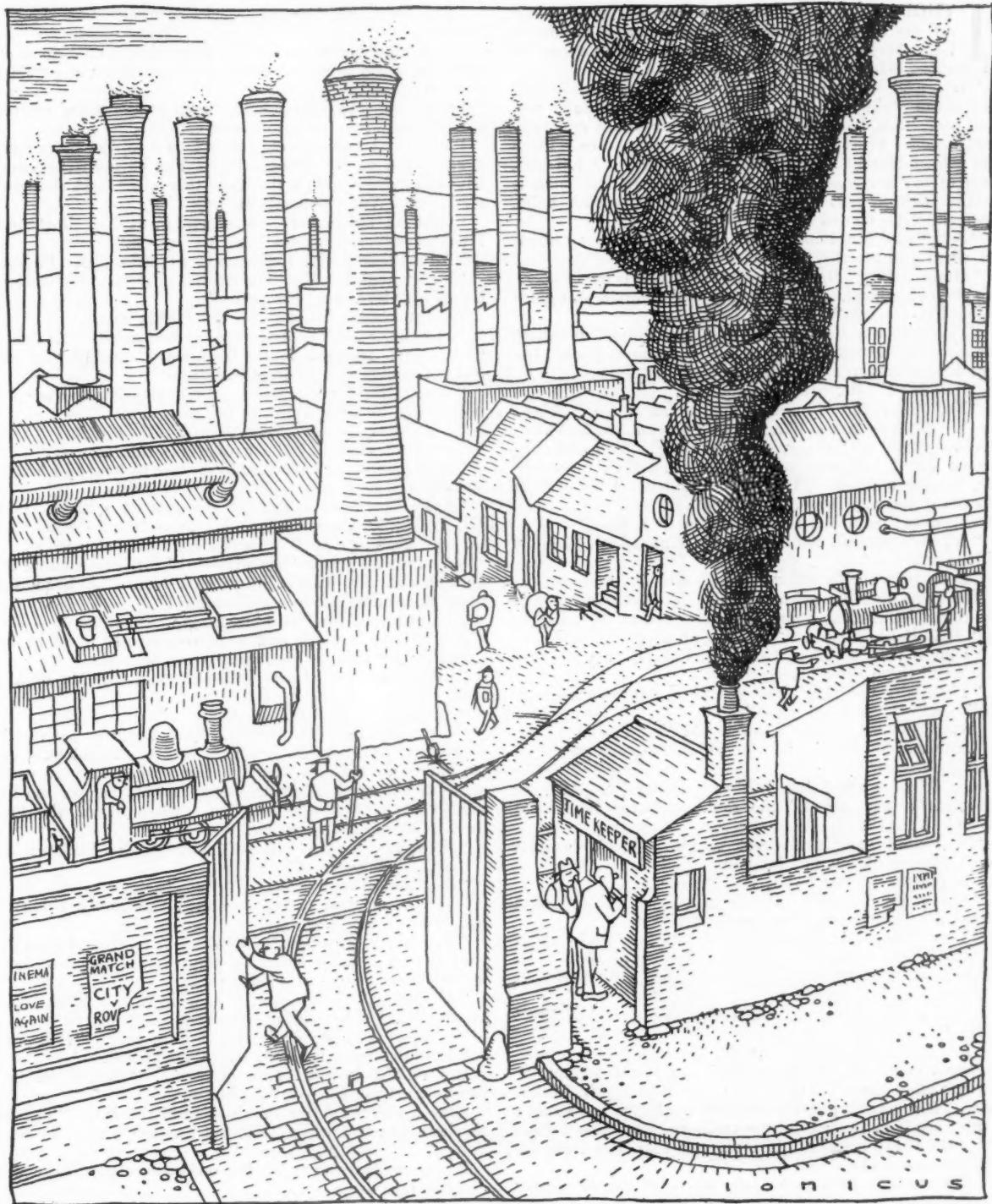
Tangosaurus

No. 1
MILITARY
DRAFTSMAN
UNIT

Isn't it wonderful to be . . .*getting . . .**out of . . .**the Services . . .**and . . .**back again . . .**to . . .**freedom! . . .*

October 29 1945

PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946



Psychology in Lambeth

I THOUGHT you was at the cinema wiv your missis an' my missis an' Tillie," said Mr. Joseph Pinkin, as he ushered Mr. Stusser into the living-room of 61 Cosham House, Lambeth.

"Was so," Mr. Stusser said sadly. "We go in; is dark like seven nights, so even when you look you dun't see. I sit on ledgies, I sit on jantlemen—seems like av'ry empty seat is full. Finely I sit down nut in dooplicate. From the screen Haydy Lamarr looks at Stusser. 'I loff you, men of my dreams,' she says. 'Dalicous! But soon is gattink lighter, and finely baside me I am seeink Bella. Soch a drestic contrast! I com out."

"Still," said Mr. Pinkin, "I s'pose you was crazy about 'er when you married 'er."

"Heppy crazy," Mr. Stusser said. "Now is med crazy." He shook his head. "To kip pace wit' wimmin you gotta think like electric."

"Psychology's the secrift," said Mr. Pinkin, polishing his pipe on his nose. "I may not be a secont Frood, but I do know 'ow ter 'andle wimmin."

"Roughly?" Mr. Stusser suggested.

"No," said Mr. Pinkin, "supple suggestion. When you've got the knack like I 'ave you can 'andle 'em as easy as gettin' soaked on a summer's day. You know the brown suit I 'ad from you f'r Mrs. P.'s Ma's funeral?" Mr. Stusser nodded. "I bet you I can get Tillie and 'er Ma ter renoverate it wivout even askin' 'em."

"Frenkly," said Mr. Stusser, "I'm incraddible."

"Where wimmin's concerned," Mr. Pinkin said, "I know all the answers."

"Bella no's all my answers too," said Mr. Stusser.

The front door banged and Miss Tillie Pinkin swept into the room, followed at a more leisurely pace by Mrs. Pinkin and Mrs. Bella Stusser. "'Ere we all are," she said.

"I know you're all 'ere," said Mr. Pinkin, "but whether you're all there I don't know."

"Then why not talk about the things you do know?" Tillie said. "We'd enjoy the 'ush."

"Stop bein' rude ter y'r Dad," said Mrs. Pinkin.

"Sorry, Ma," Tillie said. "I didn't meanter poach on your prisserves."

Mrs. Stusser eyed her husband scornfully. "Ducter Livinkstein, I presoom," she said. "Mister Wagabond Lover! Ugha!"

Mr. Pinkin gave a discreet cough. "'Ow's business goin', Stusser ole man?" he said.

"Is prectic'ly gone," said Mr. Stusser.

"Never mind," Mrs. Pinkin said, "ev'rybody says things'll be better this time nex' year."

"Yerse," said Mr. Pinkin, "even castles in the air is prefabricated nowadays. As a matter of fac'"—he winked at Mr. Stusser—"I bin consid'rin' buyin' a noo suit."

"And wot's wrong wiv y'r double-breasted chocklit?" Tillie demanded.

"It's seen better days," Mr. Pinkin said.

"Suits you down ter the ground," said Mrs. Pinkin.

"It's more like a 'all of mirrors than a suit," Mr. Pinkin said. "I'm gointer put a brave face on things, but I don't wanter see it in the seat of me trousers ev'ry time I take 'em outa the wardrobe. If I was ter tear 'em I reckon I'd 'ave seven years' bad luck."

"You deserve seven years' 'ard labour if you're gointer splash money about," Tillie said. "You know wot the posters say—'Keep on Savin'.'"

"An' 'ow much 'ave you saved this munf?" Mr. Pinkin inquired.

"You men make me sick!" Tillie shouted. "Soon as someone starts a gen'ral discussion you drag the pers'nal note in."

"Anyway," Mr. Pinkin said, "oo's alwers tellin' me ter smarten up when 'er boy friends call?"

"You can't make an old trilby into a top'-at by puttin' a noo band on it," Tillie said. "You've gorn six years wivout buyin' a suit; a fine time this is ter start changin' y'r 'abits. Wot d'you say, Ma?"

"Couldn't agree more," Mrs. Pinkin said. "But then I've never known y'r Pa listen ter reason."

"All my time's took up listenin' ter you," said Mr. Pinkin.

"Mister Pinkin," Mrs. Stusser said gravely, "a vise men leaves his wife choose his cloths."

"D'youth choose Stusser's?" Mr. Pinkin asked.

"Is Stusser vise?" Mrs. Stusser demanded. "Is he a men, even? Nunno! In dobble-brasted chocklit you are lookin' as nice as you can in annythink."

"See?" Mrs. Pinkin said. "Even Mrs. Stusser admits you're wastin' time tryin' ter improve y'rself."

"I see it's no use arguin'," said Mr. Pinkin. "You must've got outa bed the wrong side this mornin'."

"When a woman's bin runnin' a 'ome as long as I 'ave," Mrs. Pinkin said, "any side's the wrong side."

"Let's forget the subjeft f'r a couple days, then," said Mr. Pinkin. "Then I'll examine me suit an' decide wot ter do. Care f'r a breff of fresh air, Stusser, ole man?"

"A fine way you handle wimmin!" Mr. Stusser said as he followed Mr. Pinkin into the street. "A beaufiful triumph from mind over matramony!"

"You wait an' see," said Mr. Pinkin.

Mr. Stusser waited, and two evenings later when he called on the Pinkins his patience was rewarded.

"I don't think I'll be buyin' a suit after all," Mr. Pinkin said.

"No cash?" Mr. Stusser asked.

"No need," said Mr. Pinkin. "I bet you as soon as I mentioned gettin' a noo suit Tillie and 'er Ma got busy on me old one. Because why? Because when they've used up their noo clothin' coupons they'll start beggin' me f'r some of mine. A noo suit 'ud 'ave swallered the lot. See? It's oughta-suggestion."

"Ave you done y'r Dad's suit, Tillie?" Mrs. Pinkin said.

"No," Tillie said. "You?"

"No," Mrs. Pinkin said.

"You mean you 'aven't touched the ruddy thing?" Mr. Pinkin shouted.

"You never asked me," said Mrs. Pinkin. "An' as f'r your remark about us askin' f'r some of your coupons when we've finished ours, it's ridiculus."

"Abs'lootly," Tillie said. "I'm buyin' a blouse tomorrow, an' I'll be usin' me own coupons."

"Same applies ter me," Mrs. Pinkin said. "It'll jus' complete the outfit I started buyin' lars' week."

Mr. Pinkin frowned apprehensively. "Don't tell me you've used my cou—," he began.

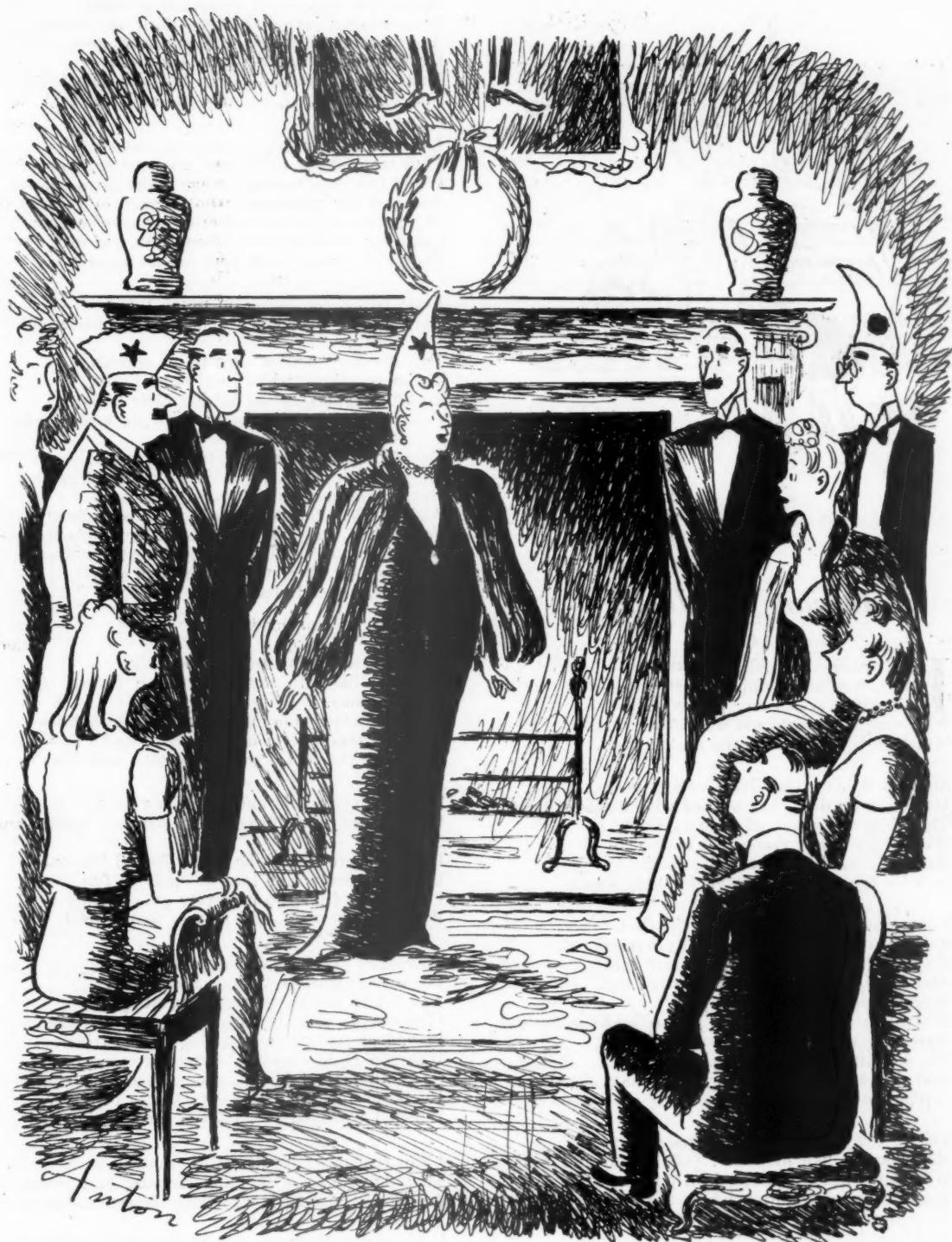
"Jus' a very few," Mrs. Pinkin said indignantly. "That's all there was left when Tillie 'ad finished buyin' er noo things."

It was suddenly so quiet that one could almost hear Mr. Pinkin's face drop.

"Like electric," said Mr. Stusser. "You gotta think like electric."

October 29 1945

PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946



"Now in the next game we all go out for an hour and come back with lumps of coal."



"Don't bother any more, Perks, we've decided to walk."

Indian Childhood

Five

I CAN remember India: I was five—
A *chota-sahib* of sailor-suited caste—
As waited-on as any prince alive,
Who walked a world too wonderful to last,
Which now is one with the eternal past.

And yet it lives, that India of lost years,
Its domes all dust, but washed with floods of light
That keep the retina of memory bright
With every infant vision that endears—
As deeply as the velvet Indian night
Invades the soul when daylight disappears.

I can remember India . . . In the dark
A lantern swung, and far-off sky burned red:
No dawn, but riots—so the bearer said;
And I, still sleepy, tumbling out of bed,
Was driven to a palace in a park,
Where, on a couch, strange picture-books outspread
Showed animals unknown to Noah's Ark—
The Maharajah laughed at this remark
And drove us home again, with troops ahead—
A night of torches . . . there I lose the thread.

Then I can see, as in a rambling trance,
Men masked like monsters, yellow-eyed and wild,
With huge heads nodding in a pompous prance
Beneath some mountain where the crags were piled
As if by creatures of intemperance;
And friends protested that the devil-dance
Was surely most unsuited to a child.
But so grotesque was every countenance
That, in my infant heart, I think I smiled. . . .

Far more disturbing to my inward sense
Echoes the memory of a growl that rolled
From nearby jungle thickets, dark and dense,
And sent me scurrying with my heart gone cold.
I can remember now—when I am old—
That yell of "Baloo!" from the khudside fence,
And someone fired, but missed—so I was told.

I can remember India—and the train
That stopped for tiffin-time, an hour or more,
While folk, not having known white boys before,
Annoyed my governess, who stormed in vain
At loathsome lazars chattering round the door,
Until her teeth fell out, when, with one roar,
They fled in fear—and were not seen again.

I can remember *tongas* on rough roads
And chasms that yawned below the chattering
wheels,

Two stubborn ponies, deaf to all appeals,
To imprecations, whips, and cruel goads,
To all save sudden fire behind their heels . . .
. . . And then the *dandy*, with its brown poles
raised

By nimble coolies up the twisting track,
Singing their songs, in which we were not praised,
But, unaware of this, I gazed and gazed,
And watched the route we'd followed rolling back—
Far plains, wide valleys, forests demon-black,
Deep torrents foaming, while a great sun blazed,
As if to light all earth wherein men strive. . . .
I can remember India. I was five.

Six

I CAN remember India: I was six,
And liked to watch my bath turned upside
down,
The water running out across clean bricks,
To bring some green into the compound's brown—
Where, in the cool, I joined my play with Dick's . . .

Dick was my cousin and a soldier's son,
Whose toys were forts, with warriors brown and
red;
His foes were Boers—he said I looked like one—
But when, supposing that he spoke in fun,
I flung this back, he promptly punched my head,
Whereat I howled—and he was sent to bed.

Thereafter—each by a maternal hand—
We were attired in various fancy frills
And led to parties on the terraced hills,
Where little girls, beribboned, gloved and fanned,
Played pretty games, emitting joyous trills—
Whereon Dick, scowling, formed a secret band
Of small male brigands, woman-scouring churls:
By these a sudden flank-attack was planned,
Which I betrayed . . . I loved those little girls!

I can remember jugglers with chained bears
That danced some shuffling measure to a drum
And round, flat baskets, whence brown snakes would
come,
Cold cobras, swaying, too, to thin-piped airs,
Who fought the swift mongoose with whipping
wrath
And, being slain, revived beneath a cloth. . . .

Then the *kutputli*, lifelike dolls on strings,
Even a *bhisti*, sprinkling water round,
Delighting us, who sat upon the ground
And found fresh pleasure in familiar things—
To hear folk mimicked with such glib resource . . .
The British officer said "Damn!" of course.

There was a party, which, I know not why,
Went forth on elephants, a prim-faced pack
Of muslined beauties, with their heads held high,
When one colossus, with a twinkling eye,
Stepped for a shocking minute from the track,
And, standing in a river, bathed his back. . . .

I can remember white gymkhana clothes . . .
My governess—a new one—roamed the tents,
But I desired to witness the events:
"The greasy pig!" I heard—and ribald oaths,
With squeals, loud laughter, and rough
compliments.

Softly I vanished for a truant spell,
And, unescorted, romped about the course,
Until a man came swearing on a horse
In search of tent-pegs, which, as it befell,
I had discovered and thrown down a well.

Then I was hurried home, with furious cries.
That governess—a red-haired vixen, she!—
Removed my garments, laid me on her knee,
And whipped me soundly—to my shrill surprise.

She left one day. There followed a "decree."
"That girl," some said, had always been "too free"
(Profound concurrence here expressed by me),
And "it was bound to happen—with those eyes."

Yet, for a while, she cured my "spoilt-boy" tricks.
I can remember that—though I was six.

Seven

I CAN remember India: I was seven.
The sun stood still, it seemed, in highest
heaven,
While, oft outdistancing a weary *syce*,
And heedless of remarks on how I grew,
I rode on pony-back through paradise,
In whose bright patterns everything was new;
And, as the *chota-sahib* came trotting through,
A scarlet form dismounted, stepped aside,
Salaamed, and waited by the dusty way,
An old bemedalled blade with beard of grey,
Straight as a pine; alert, but quiet-eyed;
I see his face and figure clear to-day—
No slave's abasement there, but service pride.

Fear came to me upon Humayan's Tomb;
In whose dim shadows phantoms walked, I'd
heard,
For, as I gazed into the nether gloom
Through gratings on the terrace, some white bird
Flapped up against them with a cry of doom.
I crept, that night, into my mother's room.

With happier soul I saw the Kutub Tower,
A mighty limb, cloud-high above the street,
Which some ascended for what seemed an hour
Meeting great winds of unsuspected power,

For, while we waited in the fly-filled heat,
My uncle's *topi* tumbled at our feet.
The Jumna Musjid showed a tuft of beard—
The holy Prophet's—in a small glass case.
A sea of souls bowed low in that stone space;
Kaleidoscopes rolled back and reappeared,
As tides of prayer swept surging through the place.
Yet someone said theirs was a heathen race. . . .

I can remember meals in sun-charged air,
Cool mangoes, and the *punkah*'s rhythmic sweep,
Its slow cessation and a smothered swear,
Because the coolie had dropped off to sleep.
I can remember now the angry leap
My quiet father gave—for once irate,
Because a snake the *mali* showed as dead
Stirred suddenly and hissed its living hate—
How, seizing on the stick, he thrashed its head,
Crying "*Aissay marao!*" till its life had sped,
Though not more swiftly than that *mali* fled. . . .

I can see rickshawed sunshades, bright as may,
And one old lady's carriage bowling through:
She'd seen the Mutiny, I heard some say—
I'd never know the things her girlhood knew;
I was a lucky boy to live to-day,
When only distant frontier bullets flew.

Indeed I was! I have its memory still,
Quick scenes, like figures in a sunlit pool,
Which I can stir and waken at my will—
But not diminish, while the dream-springs fill,
Though youth be gone and its hot blood run cool. . . .

I called my third new governess a fool,
Which was the truth; but truth at times comes ill.
My parents deemed me due to face the mill,
And brought me home to England—and to school.

G. D. M.

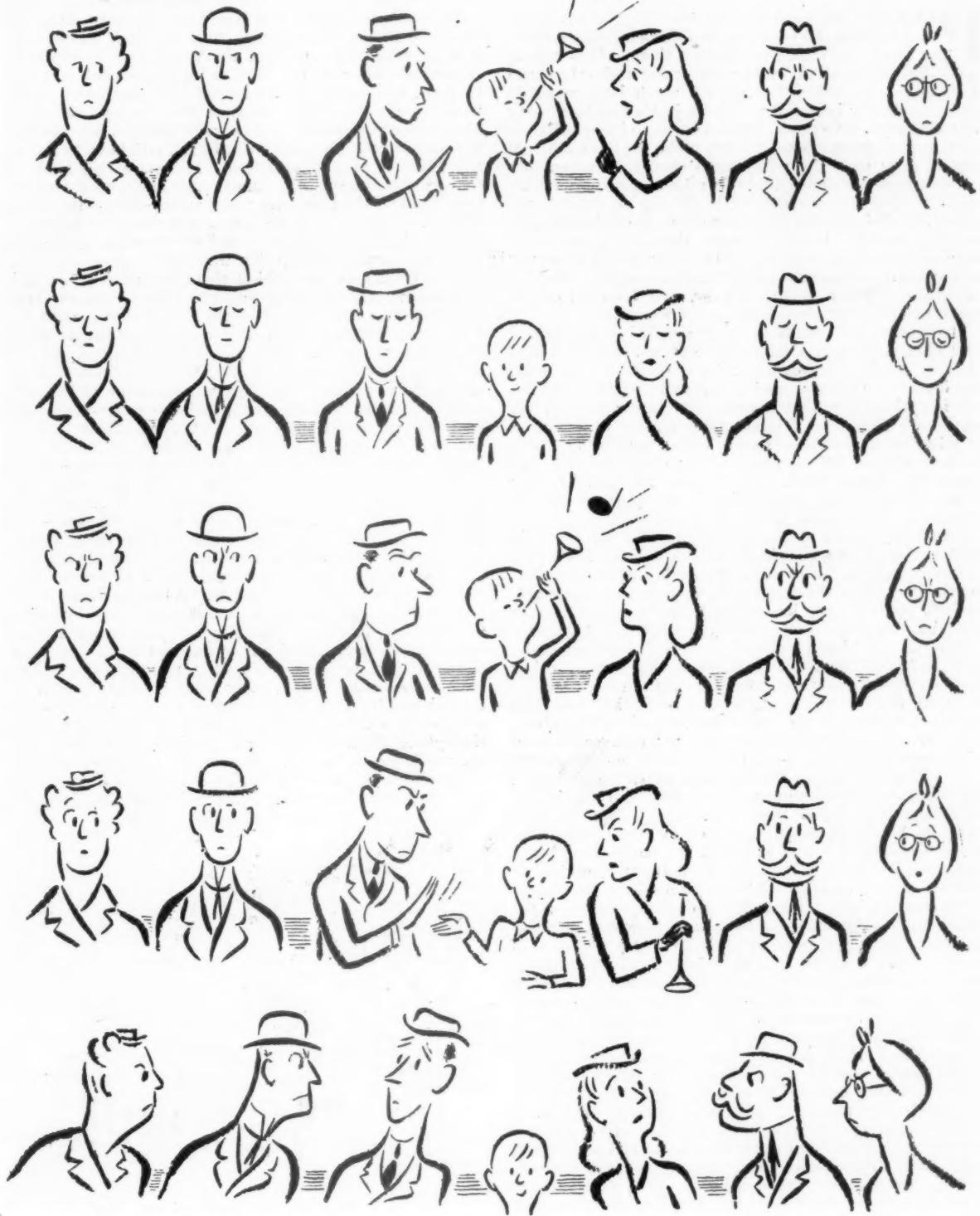




October 29 1945

PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946

J.W.TAYLOR



Taxis

PERHAPS the most remarkable thing about taxis, next to their cleverness in turning round, is the spirit in which the public approaches them. It is safe to assert that nearly all taxi-takers are acting under the stress of something or other, having too much luggage to do anything else, or being late, or even just going to a party for which they have got so dressed up as to have lost their sense of proportion. Such factors make for the emotional grip of taxis over the public, and should be taken into account, however slightly, when we hear people grumbling over the present-day difficulty in finding an empty one. Indeed, statisticians say that while there may, statistically speaking, be more taxis in London than there were when there were more, to taxi-hailers the ratio of full to empty taxis remains constant—enough full ones to make this particular occasion the worst ever, and then an empty one to make the next occasion seem worse still.

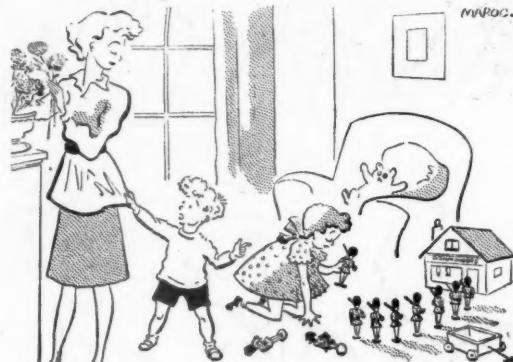
The word "taxi" calls to mind something square and dark blue, shiny and a bit dented outside, and black and squashy inside; we might, in fact, think it was what philologists call onomatopoeia, or a word which could not mean anything but what it does. But actually, as everyone knows, it is short for something longer; people are a bit misty what, but they know it has something to do with the taximeter, a difficult name for the clock that ticks the money up. Before finishing with the word "taxi" I want to note what a fine authoritative cry other people can make of it, particularly in the gathering dusk.

A taxi is, I have mentioned, square and dark blue, in effect if not always in colour. It has a black hood, like a pram, which can be let down on the day after a fine day, and the part where the driver sits is open so that passengers who are not sure they have tipped him enough can make up for it with some sympathetic comment about the rain. In general, a taxi has a highly characteristic look, especially from the front. My readers will know what I mean if they imagine themselves trying to pick out an approaching taxi from the rest of the traffic, and recall their reactions to that undersized bonnet, that high, surprised look above it, and that flag which denotes that it will look empty until it gets near enough for them to see that it is full. Inside a taxi the main features are the black squashy upholstery, the ash-trays, the coconut-matting floor and the tip-up seats opposite. These seats give much scope to that aspect of life which may be defined as social obligation, or the necessity of acting as we do not really think other people expect us to. The point about tip-up seats is that they are not supposed to be as comfortable as the upholstered seat opposite. The result is of course that you get people fairly scrumming for them, and almost convincing the others sitting in comfort opposite that a tip-up seat has something over the squashy kind. This, with society fixed as it is fixed, is how things should be; but I have only to remind users of tip-up seats of that instinctive grip they take on themselves when the taxi approaches a corner to make them see, once again, how unselfish and unappreciated they are. I must also mention, while talking about corners, the scientifically interesting fact that if a heavy suitcase is standing upright opposite a passenger, that passenger will automatically put out a foot to keep it upright while going round a corner, and the suitcase will automatically fall over on to the passenger's foot. And, while talking about luggage, I must mention that no one has ever taken a bicycle on a taxi without feeling terrible at what the poor driver is going through

with all those straps and bits of string, and swearing inwardly never to do it again till next time.

Sometimes a taxi has a flower-vase, and sometimes an advertisement or two. The advertisements make most impression on people who are being terribly late, and therefore so preoccupied that they will read every word with agonized interest, and the flower-vase makes most impression when it has flowers in, a personal note apt to make taxi-takers almost tearful with gratitude. Taxi-windows are interesting because *they go up and down*. To a public accustomed to those old-fashioned bus-windows it does not yet fully realize it does not still have to put up with, this is very nice indeed. There are two kinds of taxi-window, one with a handle and one with a top rim to push at; if the kind with a rim works slightly the better of the two, that is only because where there is a handle to be turned one way people would not be what they are if they did not turn it the other way first.

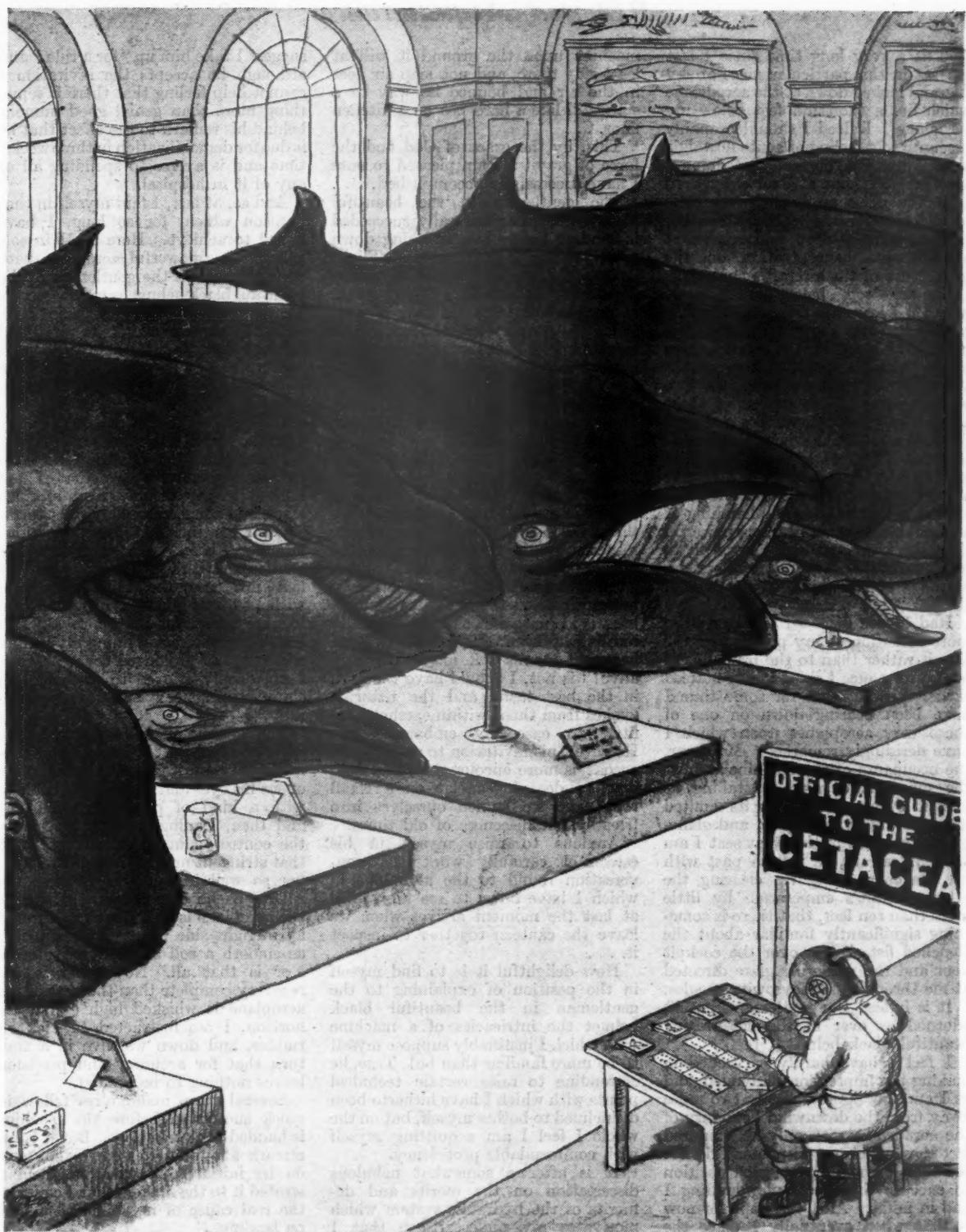
Now I must say something about the clock which tells people how much they are going to have to pay the taxi-driver besides the tip. The clock is, indeed, quite the most important part of a taxi, for without it people would be having free rides, which would be ridiculous. Philosophers go so far as to say that they like to think that the clock gives an extra edge to our enjoyment of the ash-trays, the loops to hold on to, and the flower-vases, and that perhaps this is why the clock is so placed that we cannot help seeing it every time we look at it. No one knows exactly how a clock works, because the mechanism is inside where it cannot be got at by the passengers, but it is quite easy to see what happens outside. It starts at ninepence, which it holds on to for some little time—just long enough, in fact, for a passenger who has made a short trip to feel rather awkward about giving the driver only an extra threepence. When once it has ticked up to a shilling it changes fairly rapidly, though probably quite consistently to anyone keen enough to keep an eye on it for the whole journey. Most people, however, are content to give it a warning glance now and then until they come to the last lap, when they will sit up and glare at it. This seems reasonable enough. But what is rather surprising, statisticians tell us, is the number of people who when they are glaring at a taxi-clock are egging it on to tick up another threepence; because they have ready in their hand just too much money to cover the fare and what they consider a reasonable tip for a fare which is threepence more than it is at present, and just too little to ask the driver for what he would consider reasonable as change.



"She's taken my toy soldiers to play shops."

October 29 1945

PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946



Renewed Acquaintance

IT is a very long time since I last sat in this particular piece of sky and looked down at the aerodrome which lies a thousand feet below my aeroplane. Indeed I should probably succumb to a feeling of acute nostalgia were it not for the fact that doing a spectacular circuit at over a hundred and fifty miles an hour leaves little room for any mental occupation other than that of a deep and somewhat apprehensive concentration on the precise use of the aircraft's controls.

The aerodrome below me is the one whereon I learnt to fly, guided by the master hand of the gentleman in the beautiful black helmet, but it is now many years since first I cleaved the atmosphere in his company, the two of us accommodated in one of those absurd little aeroplanes I see dotted below me at their various dispersal points. Now the war is over and I am visiting him again, ostensibly to pay my respects, but at the same time to exhibit my prowess in the handling of an aeroplane seven times more powerful than the type on which he saw fit to teach me to fly. My landing, therefore, must be, as the aviators say, "out of the bag." . . .

Had I been disposed to pay a little more attention to my position on the circuit rather than to the brilliance of my performance I should have noticed earlier the fact that for some time I have been bearing down on one of those very aeroplanes upon which I have deridingly remarked. Moreover, the occupants of the machine are, at the moment, engaged in taking as violent evasion action as its limited manœuvrability will allow, and glancing at the pilot in the front seat I am suddenly aware, as I flash past with my starboard wing tip clearing the other aircraft's empennage by little more than ten feet, that there is something significantly familiar about the clenched fist shaken over the cockpit door and the withering glare directed at me through the Meyrowitz goggles.

It is indeed the gentleman himself, adorned as ever in the close-fitting beautiful black helmet.

I feel I have hardly succeeded in making the impression I intended, and as I am now approximately two miles away from the downwind boundary of the aerodrome with only six hundred feet showing on my altimeter I do not consider I am in a very good position to execute the spectacular landing I had in mind. All I can hope for now is that when eventually I place the

machine upon the ground it will at least stay there, and not leap six feet in the air and bounce its way to a standstill like a hard pea on a kitchen floor. . . .

This, by the grace of God and the force of gravity, I am pleased to note I have successfully accomplished. . . .

The gentleman in the beautiful black helmet has naturally succeeded in landing before me, touching down a few yards from the door of the Flight Office, so that he has the minimum distance to walk to his morning cocoa. I, on the other hand, have a considerable portion of the perimeter track to negotiate before I can join him, so that when at last I switch off my engine and clamber out of the aeroplane the gentleman has long since disappeared through the door of the canteen.

I enter alone, therefore, and sliding my helmet over the back of my head so that it comes to rest with easy grace alongside my left ear, I press my way through the throng and tap my finger respectfully on the shoulder of the master of aeronautics. He turns round, gazes at me for a few moments without recognition and then elevates his eyebrows in surprise as he gradually recalls who I am. His remark, "Good heavens! Don't tell me you're still alive!" is not, I should have thought, in the best taste, and the titter it evokes from those within earshot does little to ease my embarrassment. However, his invitation to a "stoup of cocoa" is more encouraging, and as I crack a decaying molar on a Naafi rock cake we launch ourselves into friendly reminiscences of old times.

Anxious to raise myself in his esteem I carefully work the conversation round to the aeroplane in which I have flown to see him, until at last the moment arrives when we leave the canteen together to inspect it. . . .

How delightful it is to find myself in the position of explaining to the gentleman in the beautiful black helmet the intricacies of a machine with which I justifiably suppose myself to be more familiar than he! True, he is tending to raise certain technical points with which I have hitherto been disinclined to bother myself, but on the whole I feel I am acquitting myself with commendable proficiency.

It is after a somewhat nebulous dissertation on the merits and demerits of the hydraulic system which motivates my undercarriage that I

suggest I take him up "for a ride," and although he accepts the invitation I cannot help feeling that there is something more than genial good humour behind his remark to the effect that he is due for demobilization in three weeks' time and is averse to spending all or any of it in hospital.

And so, at last, I find myself in that position which, for so long, I have hoped to achieve. Here am I in sole charge of a powerful aeroplane with none other than the gentleman in the beautiful black helmet as my passenger. There, at my side, he sits, gazing with what I like to think is profound interest but cannot help feeling is nearer acute apprehension at the impressive array of instruments confronting us both.

Unfortunately the designer of my machine had in mind more the purpose of general utility rather than spectacular manœuvrability, so that I am limited in my display to a steepish climb and a few reasonably tight turns. These I continue for some little time, however, chiefly to acquaint the gentleman with the fact that I have at last mastered the ability to turn without losing hundreds of feet, but on looking round for his approval, with beads of perspiration lining my helmet as a result of prolonged concentration, I am deeply grieved to discover him slumped in his seat and dozing peacefully.

Tapping him on the knee I apologize, with a touch of bitterness, for the mediocrity of my performance. He opens his eyes and accepts my apology with a kind of pitying graciousness and then, leaning towards me, takes the control column himself, and with that stringent urgency which I remember so well instructs me to use the rudder as he commands. In a trice the aeroplane is on its back and round again right side up having completed as smooth a roll as any I have seen. Nor is that all. No sooner is the recovery complete than the nose of the aeroplane is whisked high above the horizon, I am instructed to kick on rudder, and down we dive in a stall turn that for accuracy and precision leaves nothing to be desired.

Several more manœuvres follow in quick succession before the machine is handed back to me. . . . But it is his remark about having flown this type on its initial tests when he demonstrated it to the makers that I consider the real cause of my bursting a tyre on landing.

Travellers

WHEN the mist drops slowly over the hill and but for a fox-bark all is still,
I hear the silence fade to sound:
something definite over the ground.
Aye, now that the roads are quiet as a lane we hear it—we hear it—
we hear it again!
Is it a heralding—
does it forbode—
that *clip-clop, clip-clop*
on the road?
Is it a shepherd riding his cob,
with a long-haired sheep dog christened Bob?
Is it a farmer coming from the fair,
rolling in the saddle on his half-legged mare?
Is it a tradesman earning what he can
from his country round and two-wheeled van?
Over the fen and over the hill when the night was coming and all was still I heard that *clip-clop* years ago, and I used to say "It's a sound I know." And now, in the frost, as the day nears the night, and the chimney's smoke curls slow and white, there's the *clip-clop, clip-clop* passing by:
I can hear it nearer—and I hear it die. . . .
When machines and cars come back to the roads, and the air is as busy carrying loads, perhaps no horses in English weather will snort and sweat and strain at leather—but I will listen, and I shall still hear that *clip-clop* over the hill.
It will stay for ever, like a fading song, for the *clip-clop*'s been on the roads so long.

Orderly Corporal Reports

SIR,—I, 2594111 Acting Unpaid Local Lance-Corporal Smith - Featherstone, submit this my report on the occasion I apprehended Signalman Baker riding a civilian pedal-cycle in the confines of Divisional H.Q.

Upon entering the building, at 2245 hrs. on the night in question, I became attracted by unusual noises emanating from the position of the Signal Office. I proceeded to the scene and there remarked the above-mentioned Baker pedalling along the corridor at a rate of progress inconsistent with safety.

On regaining my equilibrium I commanded the rider to stop, but this command was disobeyed, and the accused descended eight stone steps with undiminished velocity, uttering what transpired to be loud hunting cries. Upon arrival at the base of the steps Baker struck the opposite wall a glancing blow and dismounted.

I then questioned Signalman Baker as to the ownership of the cycle and by whose authority he was mounted. I was informed that the machine was the property of the wife of Colonel Blood and was kept inside Divisional H.Q. to prevent persons tampering with same.

On being commanded to explain his late actions Baker made confused and evasive replies. He finally stated that, as duty Dispatch Rider, he deemed it his duty to spare no pains in perfecting his riding abilities. On being questioned

as to whether he was in the habit of delivering dispatches down flights of stairs by pedal-cycle the accused stated that he thought not.

I then cautioned Baker and proceeded into the Signal Office with the intention of procuring an escort and, if possible, a witness to the above incident. On entering the said office I perceived that the night duty shift were infringing Standing Order 1065 by reclining on their desks consuming tobacco. I pointed out a large notice upon the south wall which stated "No SMOKING" and cautioned them. They treated the matter with unbecoming levity and offered me a cigarette.

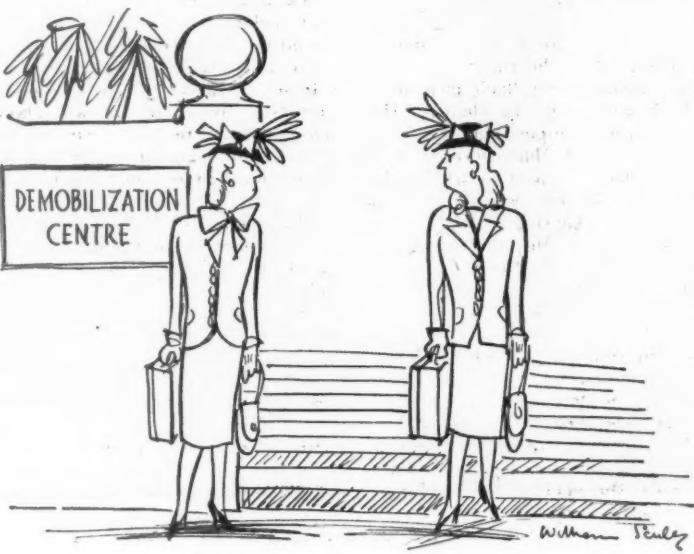
By mischance I found that I had cautioned the Signalmaster, Lt. Grid, who was deputizing for the wireless operator whilst the latter brewed tea. Lt. Grid resumed his tunic and was in conversation with me for a long spell in the course of which he advised my future procedure in detail. I expounded the crime of Signalman Baker but could not obtain either escort or witness. However, Lt. Grid promised the erection of a notice to the effect that "No Pedal-Cycles will be ridden inside H.Q."

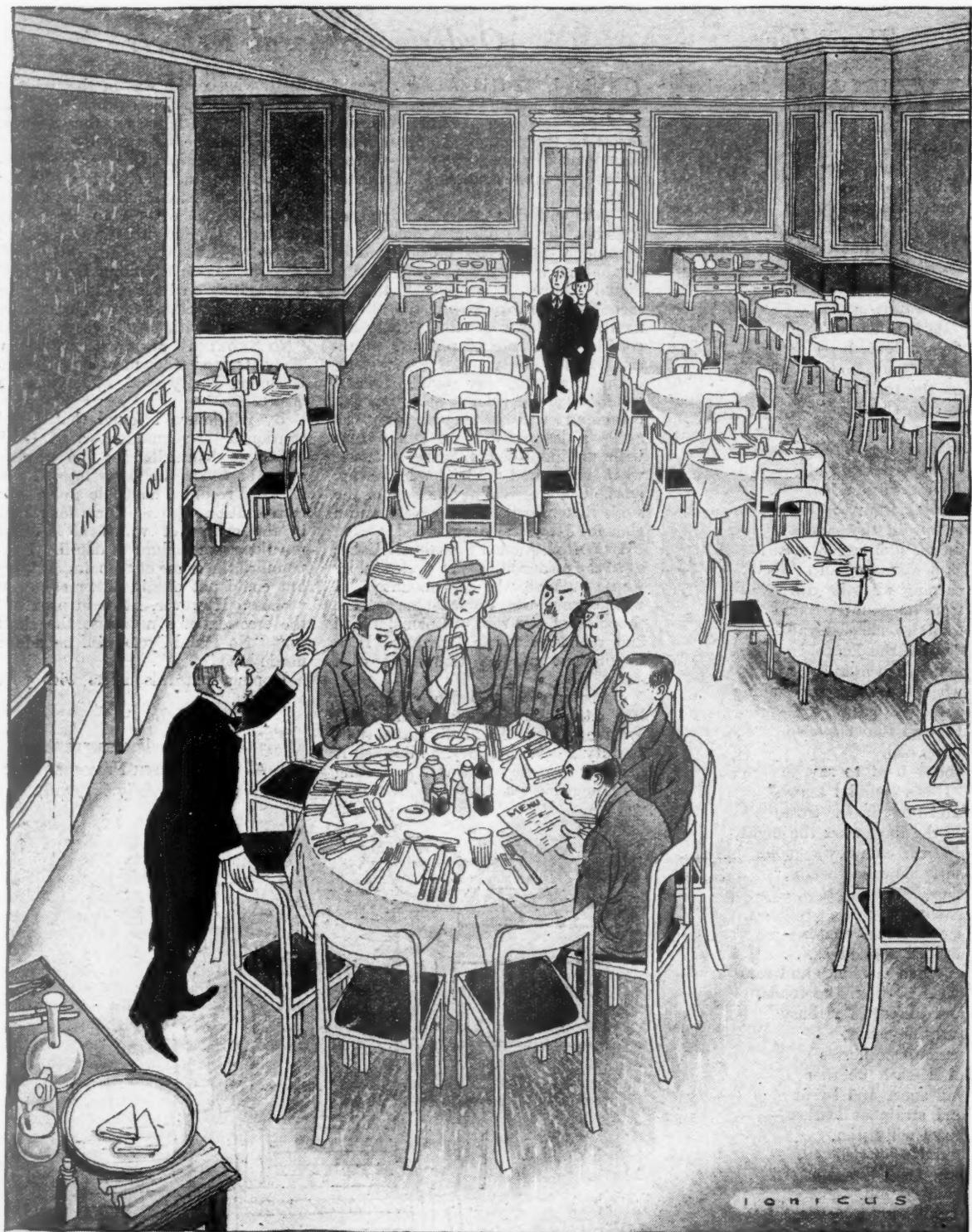
Hoping that this meets with your approval,

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

A. W. L. SMITH-FEATHERSTONE
(Acting Orderly Corporal).

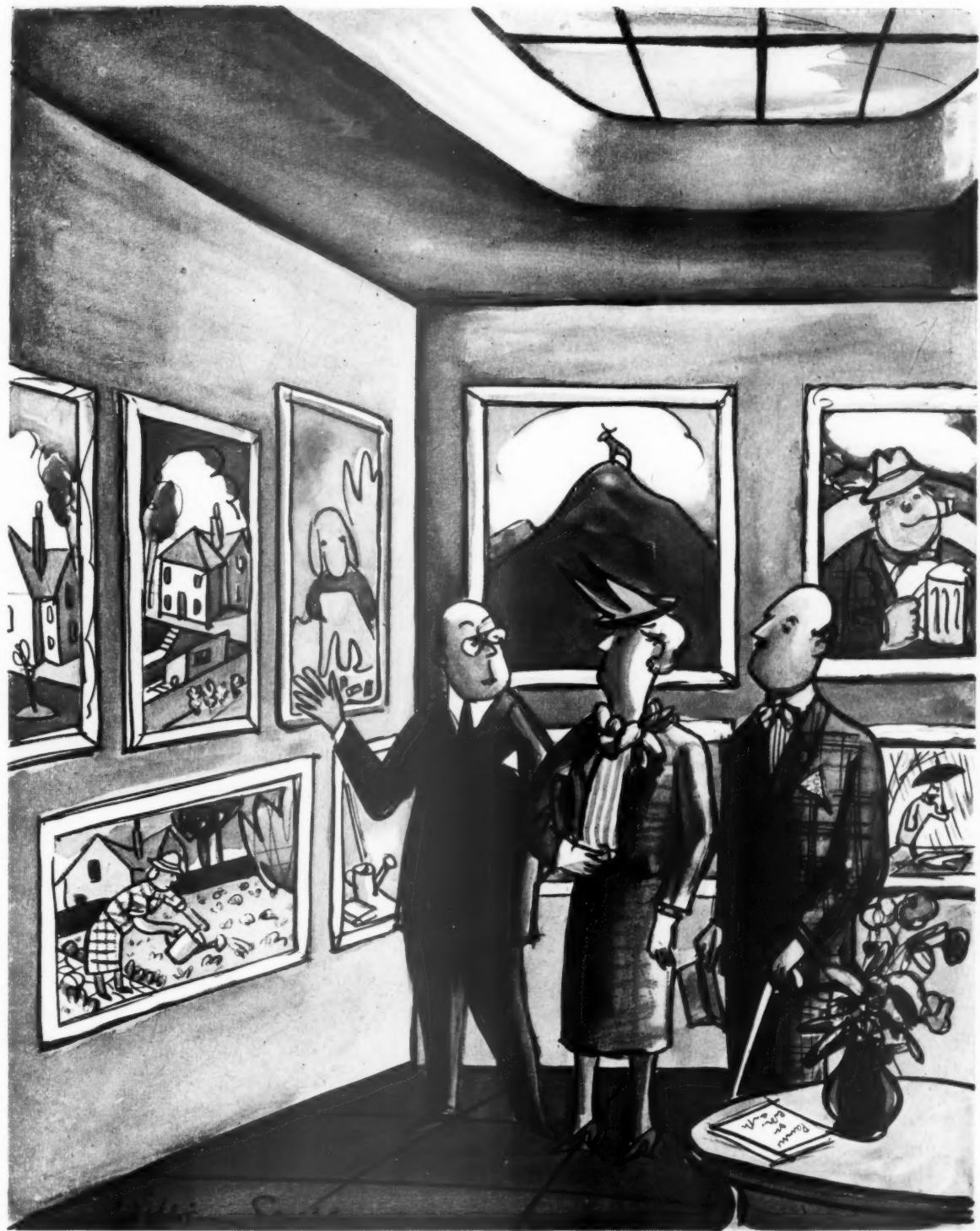




"Would you mind sitting at this table? I'm the only waiter on duty."

October 29 1945

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PUNCH ALMANACK FOR 1946

October 29 1945



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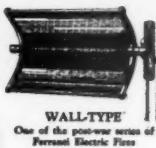


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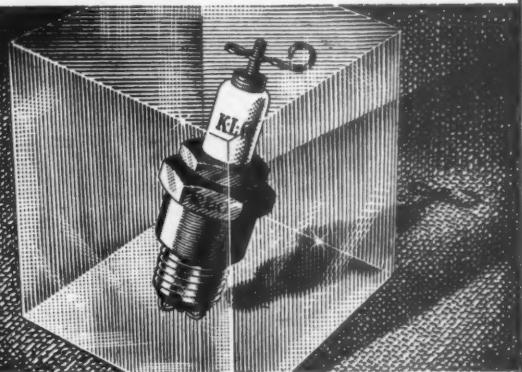
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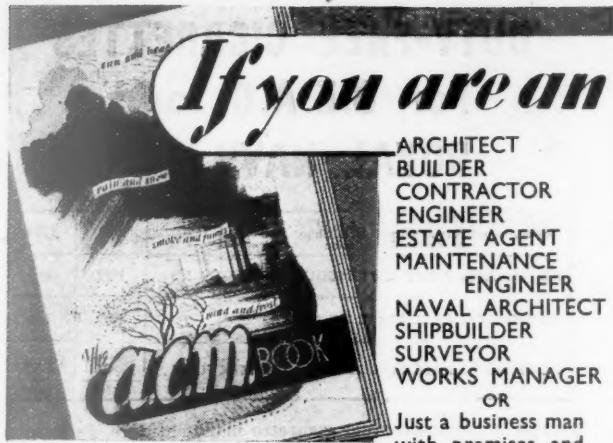
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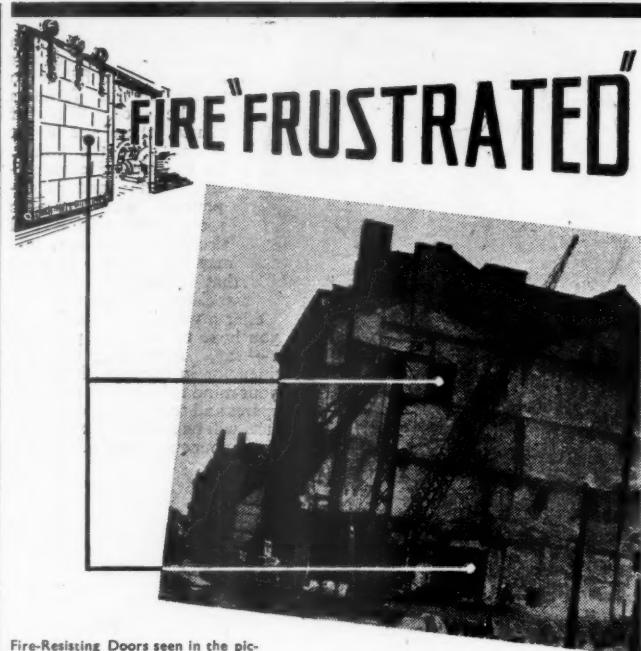
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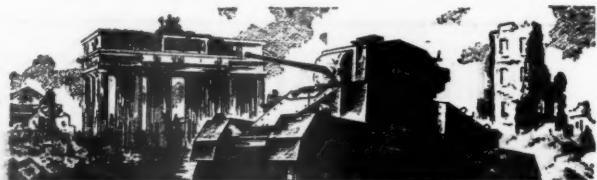
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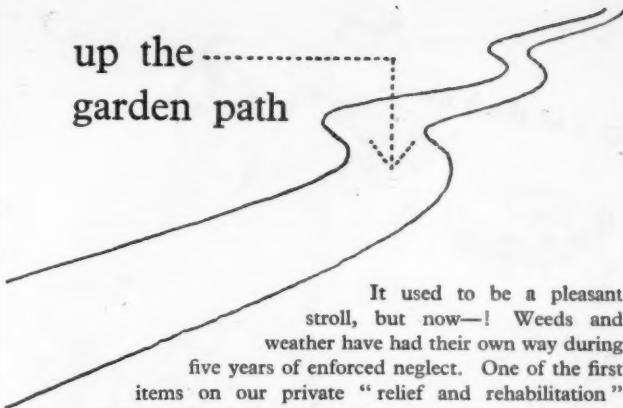


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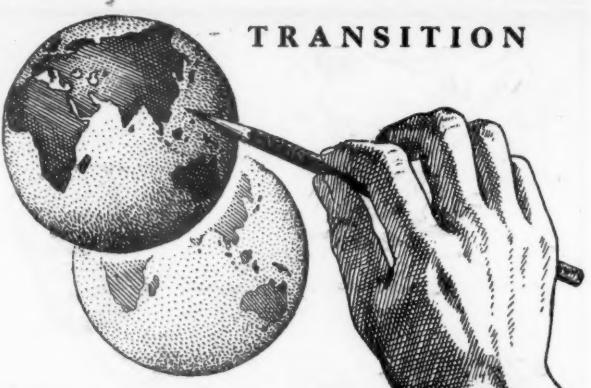


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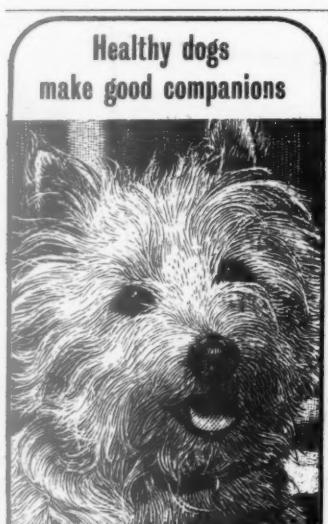


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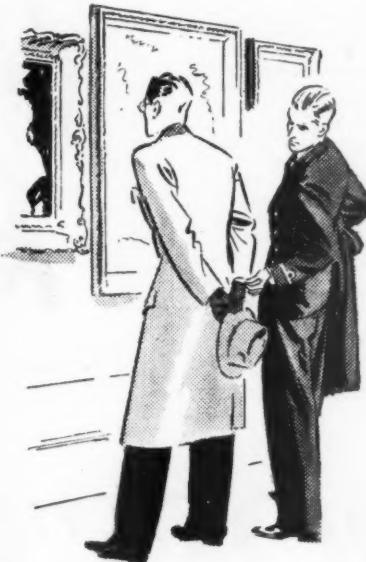
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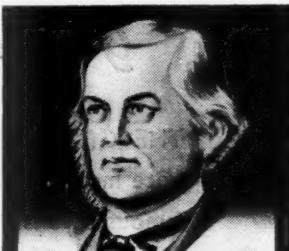
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and in devious terms, have
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Time is surely the most
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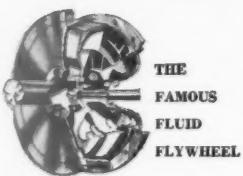


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